

# HELLBLAZER

BY  
STJEPAN  
ŠEJIĆ

BOOK  
ONE





HARLEY  
QUINN

**BOOK ONE**

**STJEPAN ŠEJIĆ**  
STORY AND ART

**GABRIELA DOWNIE**  
LETTERS

**STJEPAN ŠEJIĆ**  
COVER AND VARIANT COVER

**HARLEY QUINN** CREATED BY  
**PAUL DINI** AND **BRUCE TIMM**





AT FIRST IT SEEMS LIKE ANOTHER NIGHTMARE.

IN THIS DREAM I WALK A LONG, WINDING ROAD THROUGH A WARPED VERSION OF GOTHAM.

I'VE DREAMT OF THIS ROAD BEFORE. I'VE SEEN **THE TERRORS** THAT AWAIT ME AT ITS END.

AND YET, EVERY TIME, I KEEP WALKING.

EVERY TIME I THINK, **THIS TIME WILL BE DIFFERENT.**

AND THIS TIME, I'M **RIGHT.**



ANY OTHER NIGHT, THE MIST WOULD RISE AND A **GRINNING MONSTER** WOULD ERUPT OUT OF IT TO **DEVOUR ME.**

**THIS** NIGHT, THERE IS NO SINISTER LAUGHTER. NO MOUTH WITH TOO MANY TEETH SMILING HUNGRILY AT ME.

NO, THIS TIME IT'S JUST **THE BATS.**

THEY LOOK LIKE BATS, BUT IN MY DREAMING MIND THEY'RE **VULTURES.**



SUDDENLY I'M SURE OF ONE THING: SOMEONE IS ABOUT TO **DIE!**



THEY TAKE ME TO THE INEVITABLE PLACE...

... **THE END OF THE ROAD** WHERE SWIRLING MISTS RISE AND, LIKE EVERY OTHER TIME, **HE** IS THERE.

BUT THIS TIME IT'S DIFFERENT.

THIS TIME, THE MONSTER IS DIFFERENT...





I RUN TOWARD  
THEM...

THE MAN ON  
THE GROUND...

THE GIANT BEAST...

AND THE BATS.

IF A LARGE GROUP OF CROWS  
GETS TO BE CALLED A *MURDER*,  
THEN IN MY DREAM I THINK,  
*THIS IS A FEAST.*

A FEAST OF BATS.

BUT HUNGRY THOUGH THEY ARE,  
THEY DON'T ATTACK. INSTEAD  
THEY *SCREAM*. THEY *LAUGH*.  
AND THEY *CHEER*.

THEY WANT *HIM* TO  
DO IT *FOR* THEM.

THE GREAT BEAST MUST  
DRAW BLOOD. THE GREAT  
BEAST MUST *KILL* FOR THE  
FEAST TO BEGIN.

AND IN MY DREAM I  
FEEL *GUILTY*. I FEEL  
*RESPONSIBLE*.

KILL

KILL

KILL

KILL

KILL



AFTER ALL...HE  
IS MY PATIENT.

LEAVE HIM  
ALONE!



CAST HIM  
AWAY!  
HE IS  
BEYOND  
HELP.

NO!  
I...  
...I CAN  
DO IT!



BE IT  
ON YOUR  
HANDS, THEN,  
DOCTOR...

THE GREAT  
BEAST LEAVES,  
HIS BATS IN TOW.





THE AIR GROWS SILENT.

ARE YOU...

ARE YOU  
OKAY?

YOU...

WHY DIDN'T  
YOU RUN?

YOU WERE  
SUPPOSED TO  
RUN.

NOT  
ANYMORE.

I AM *YOUR*  
DOCTOR.

I'M HERE  
TO *HELP*.

YES, THIS DREAM  
IS DIFFERENT.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, HIS  
FACE IS NOT MONSTROUS.

HE SMILES...AND I MAKE THE  
*WORST MISTAKE* OF MY LIFE...

...I *SMILE BACK*.

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I WOULD  
THINK BACK ON THIS DREAM AND  
FIGHT BACK A LAUGH.

THE WHOLE THING FELT LIKE ONE OF THOSE TRASHY  
ROMANCE TALES WHERE A PLAIN, ORDINARY GIRL  
MEETS MR. TALL, SEXY AND DANGEROUS. A BEAST  
THAT SIMPLY NEEDS HER GENTLE TOUCH  
AND A LITTLE BIT OF GUIDANCE.


IN THOSE STORIES, THE GIRL HELPS  
THE BEAST REGAIN HIS HUMANITY...

IN THOSE STORIES, THE  
BEAST *LOVES* THE GIRL...

I ASSURE YOU, MINE IS  
NOT ONE SUCH STORY.

NO, MY STORY ENDED UP BEING  
*SOMETHING COMPLETELY*  
*DIFFERENT*.





MY STORY'S THE ONE WHERE THE GIRL  
DANCES WITH THE DEVIL, AND HE TAKES  
HER WITH HIM ON A LONG ROAD TO HELL.

THAT ROAD STARTS,  
AS THEY OFTEN DO...



...WITH A GOOD INTENTION.

I MEAN, YOU GOTTA UNDERSTAND, DOCTOR, WE **ALL** HAD OUR BEST INTENTIONS GOING IN.

WE HAD A CODE! NO WOMEN, NO CHILDREN!

MICKEY AND I **SWORE** TO THAT...

I MEAN, WE WERE NOTHING BUT TWO AMPED-UP JACKASSES WITH MORE BALLS THAN BRAINS, BUT WE WEREN'T FUCKING **ANIMALS**.

FOR THE FIRST FEW MONTHS WE KEPT OUR PROMISE. IT WASN'T HARD. WE HAD THE INSURGENTS ON THE MOVE...

HELL, THE WAR SEEMED AS GOOD AS **WON**... BUT THAT'S THE THING. WHEN YOU GOT THE TECHNOLOGICAL SUPERIORITY, THE ENEMY **ADAPTS**.

PROPER TERM FOR IT WAS **GUERRILLA WARFARE**... WE CALLED IT THE **ROACH WAR**.

SEE, THEY WERE LIKE ROACHES CRAWLING FROM UNDERNEATH EVERY FUCKING ROCK. YOU COULD NEVER **GET RID OF THEM**.

SNEAK ATTACKS, BACK STABS...ON ONE OCCASION THEY EVEN POISONED OUR WATER SUPPLY.

A SIX-MONTH DEPLOYMENT STRETCHED INTO **THREE YEARS**...

ONE DAY MICKEY AND I WERE ON A BREAK, VISITING A LOCAL BAR.

LOOKING FOR SOME **ACTION**. DOCTOR, YOU UNDERSTAND...

THERE WAS THIS GIRL. SHE WAS EYEING MICKEY... SO I...I...

I KEPT **PUSHING** HIM. I MEAN, HOW MANY CHANCES DOES A GUY HAVE TO...PARDON MY FRENCH, BREAK OFF A PIECE OF ASS.

LITTLE BITCH HAD A **RAZOR**... OPENED MICKEY'S THROAT EAR TO EAR. SO I BROKE **MY OATH** THAT DAY. BLEW HER BRAINS OUT. EMPTIED THE WHOLE DAMNED CLIP.

SHIT LIKE THAT, IT SNAPS SOMETHING INSIDE OF YOU...

YOU START SEEING THE WORLD **DIFFERENTLY**...

WOMEN, CHILDREN...AT THE END OF THE DAY, THEY WERE **THEIR** WOMEN AND CHILDREN. EACH ONE OF THEM HIDING A RAZOR, A GUN, A FUCKING BOMB FOR ALL I KNEW...

IN A WAR ZONE, **EVERYONE IS AN ENEMY!**

WITHOUT HIM, I HAD TO BE CAREFUL. GREW EYES IN THE BACK OF MY HEAD.

MICKEY AND I...WE HAD EACH OTHER'S BACK, YOU KNOW?

TRAINED MYSELF TO SEE **THE MURDER** IN THEIR EYES.

I HAD TO GET THEM BEFORE THEY GOT ME.

SO WHAT ABOUT THE HOSPITAL?

**THEIR** HOSPITAL! THE CIVILIAN USE OF IT WAS A **FRONT**. THERE WERE OVER **SIXTY** COMBATANTS THERE! IT WAS **MY CHANCE!**

HELL, THEY SHOULD HAVE GIVEN ME A DAMNED **MEDAL!**

INSTEAD, I GOT A DISHONORABLE DISCHARGE AND AN ARREST, AND HERE I AM SPILLING EVERYTHING TO YOU, DOCTOR...

UH...





QUINZEL,  
MR. MORRIS.  
DR. QUINZEL.



TWO YEARS LATER.

MR. MORRIS *FAILED* TO MENTION THAT THE HOSPITAL HE OPENED FIRE ON ALSO HOUSED 24 INJURED CHILDREN. THERE WERE NO SURVIVORS.



**EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM:**  
Center for the Study of Criminal Psychology,  
Gotham City.

"IN A WAR ZONE, EMPATHY IS A LIABILITY."

"ACKNOWLEDGING THE HUMANITY OF YOUR ENEMY WILL CAUSE YOU TO HESITATE."

"IT IS A COURTESY YOUR OPPONENT MAY NOT GRANT YOU IN RETURN."

THESE WERE THE WORDS OF MR. MORRIS'S SUPERIOR OFFICER, WHO TO THIS DAY *DEFENDS* HIS SUBORDINATE'S ACTIONS.

THESE WORDS SPEAK TO THE HEART OF THE PROBLEM AND DEFINE THE CORE OF MY *HYPOTHESIS*.



FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE HAS LONG BEEN STUDIED, AND ITS UNDERLYING PROCESSES MAPPED.

IT IS AN INSTINCTIVE *REACTION* THAT *OVERRIDES* REGULAR BRAIN CHEMISTRY WHILE DAMPENING ONE'S ABILITY TO PROCESS EMPATHY.

IN A WAR ZONE, THIS STATE OF HYPERAROUSAL CAN *SAVE LIVES*.

THIS INSTINCT IS A PART OF A *GREATER* MECHANISM.

A KIND OF A *MENTAL IMMUNE SYSTEM* DESIGNED TO PROTECT US FROM IMMINENT THREAT BY MANAGING BODY CHEMISTRY IN A WAY THAT MAXIMIZES OUR CHANCES OF SURVIVAL.

BUT WHAT IF THIS MECHANISM IS OVERUSED?

AND FOR EXTENDED PERIODS OF TIME?

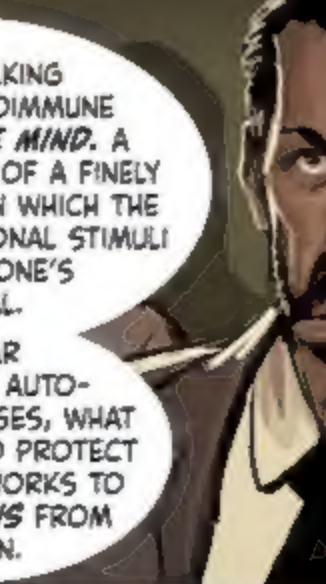
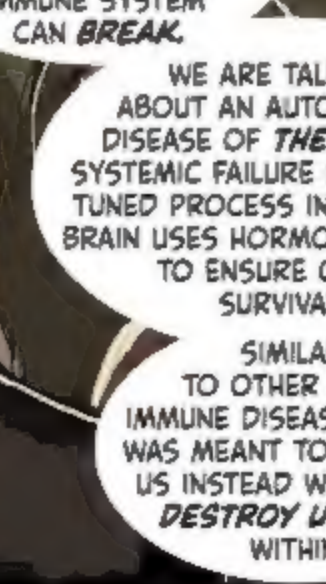


IT'S NOT HARD TO IMAGINE THIS IN HOSTILE ENVIRONMENTS WHERE SOLDIERS SPEND *YEARS*.

UNDER THOSE CONDITIONS, I PROPOSE THIS MENTAL IMMUNE SYSTEM CAN *BREAK*.

WE ARE TALKING ABOUT AN AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE OF *THE MIND*. A SYSTEMIC FAILURE OF A FINELY TUNED PROCESS IN WHICH THE BRAIN USES HORMONAL STIMULI TO ENSURE ONE'S SURVIVAL.

SIMILAR TO OTHER AUTO-IMMUNE DISEASES, WHAT WAS MEANT TO PROTECT US INSTEAD WORKS TO *DESTROY US* FROM WITHIN.





TO PUT IT  
BLUNTLY, THIS MAY  
RESULT IN **PERMANENT  
DETERIORATION** OF  
EMPATHY WHICH,  
UH...

...WHICH  
MIGHT LEAD  
TO DEVELOPING  
**ANTISOCIAL**  
BEHAVIORS...

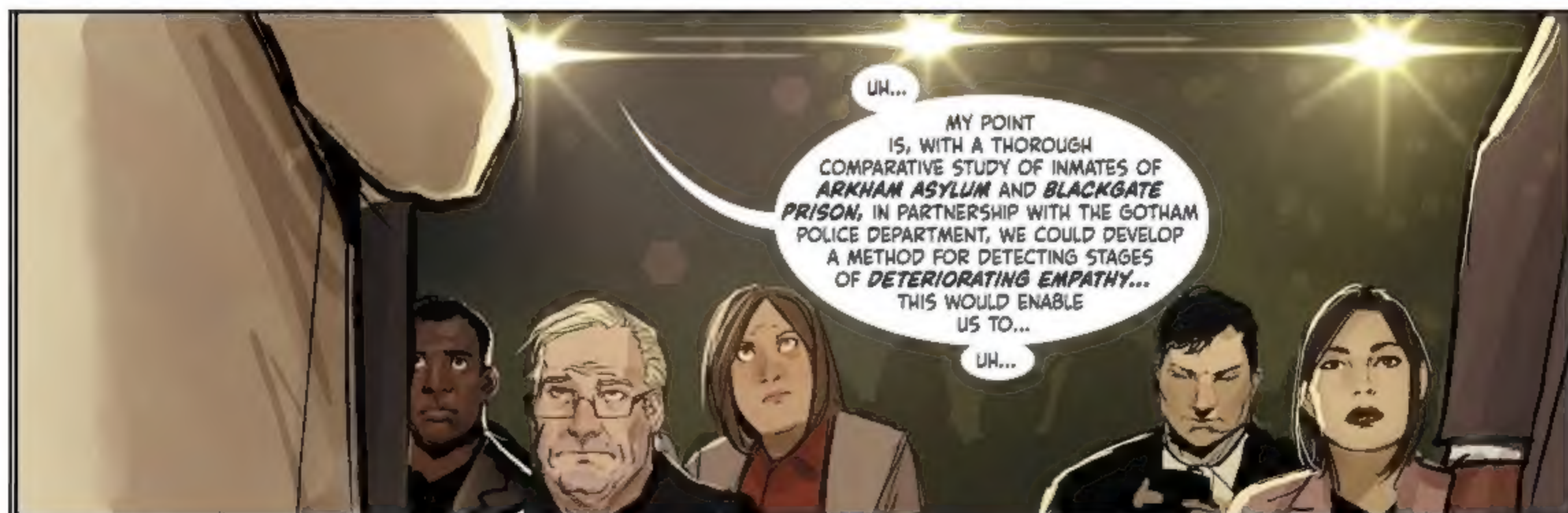
OF COURSE,  
IDENTIFYING SUCH AN  
AUTOIMMUNE DISEASE  
IN A DISTANT WAR ZONE  
IS UNLIKELY.

HOWEVER,  
WE NEED LOOK  
NO FURTHER FOR A  
WAR ZONE THAN THE  
**STREETS OF  
GOTHAM**  
ITSELF...

UH...

STATISTICS OF RECIDIVISM  
**STRONGLY** INDICATE  
THAT THERE IS A LARGE  
ISSUE NOT ONLY WITH PETTY  
CRIMINALS RELAPSING INTO  
THE LIFE OF CRIME, BUT ALSO  
WITH THE **INCREASING  
SEVERITY** OF THOSE  
CRIMES...

UM...  
THAT...



UH...  
MY POINT  
IS, WITH A THOROUGH  
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF INMATES OF  
**ARKHAM ASYLUM** AND **BLACKGATE  
PRISON**, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE GOTHAM  
POLICE DEPARTMENT, WE COULD DEVELOP  
A METHOD FOR DETECTING STAGES  
OF **DETERIORATING EMPATHY...**  
THIS WOULD ENABLE  
US TO...

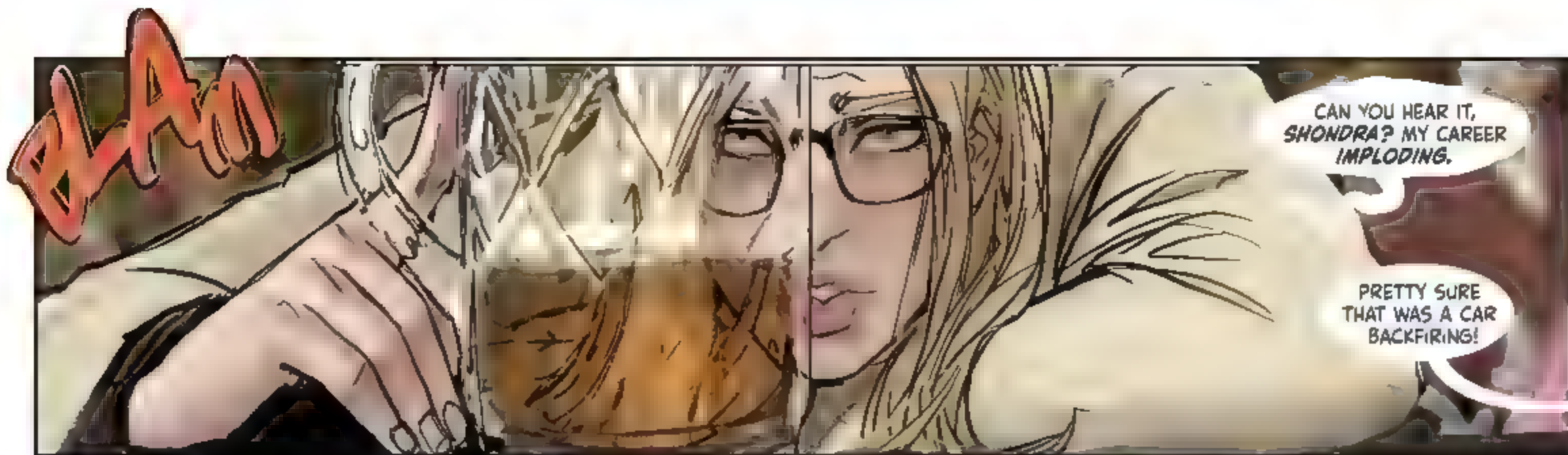
UH...



...IDENTIFY  
A SOCIOPATH IN THE  
MAKING...

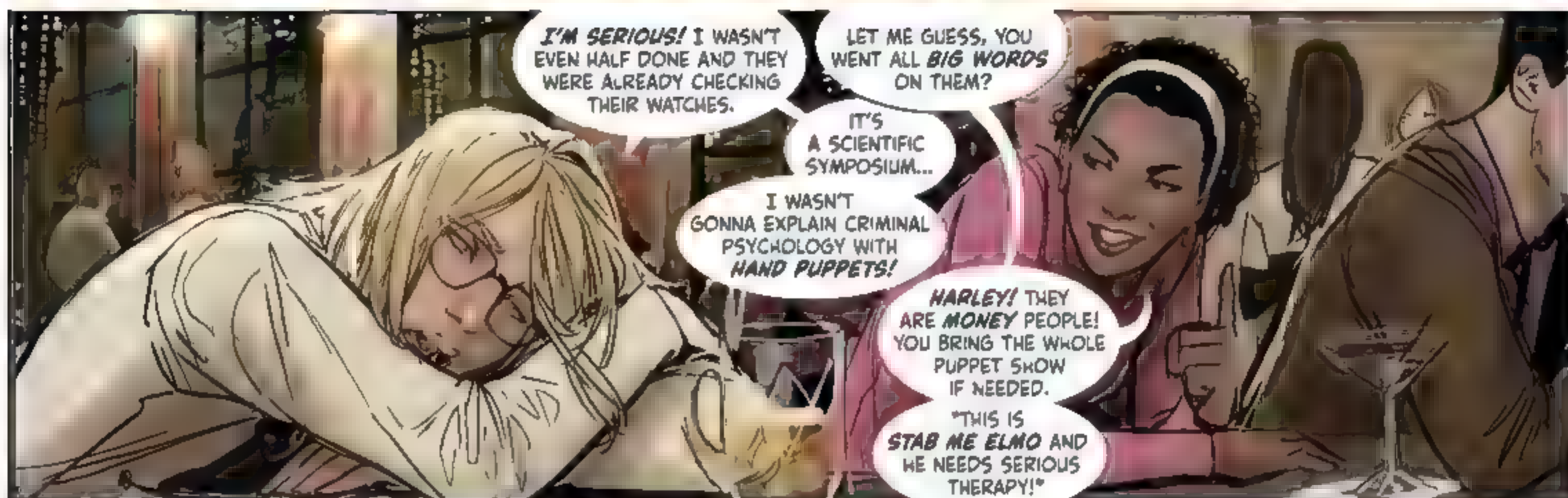






CAN YOU HEAR IT,  
SHONDRA? MY CAREER  
IMPLODING.

PRETTY SURE  
THAT WAS A CAR  
BACKFIRING!



I'M SERIOUS! I WASN'T  
EVEN HALF DONE AND THEY  
WERE ALREADY CHECKING  
THEIR WATCHES.

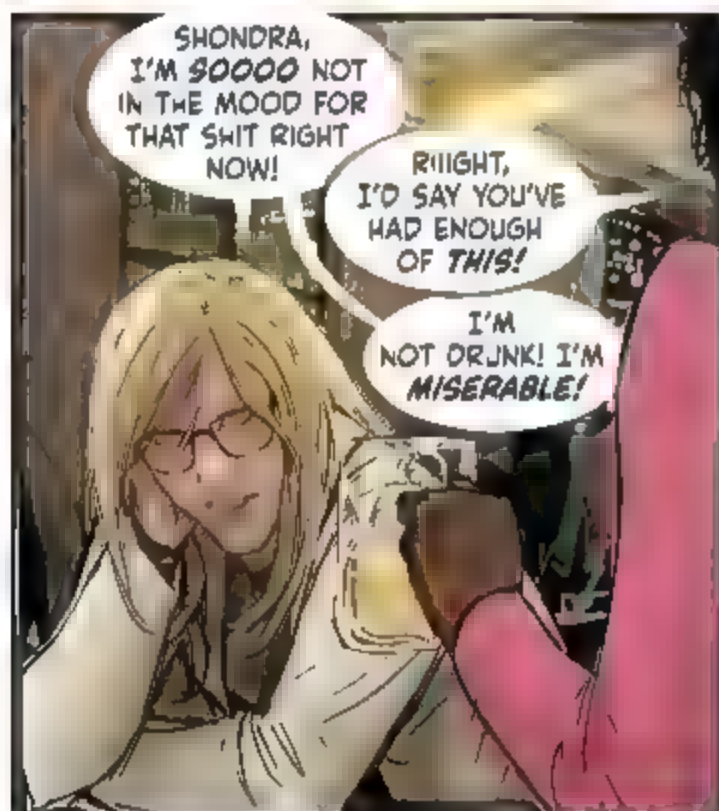
LET ME GUESS, YOU  
WENT ALL **BIG WORDS**  
ON THEM?

IT'S  
A SCIENTIFIC  
SYMPOSIUM...

I WASN'T  
GONNA EXPLAIN CRIMINAL  
PSYCHOLOGY WITH  
**HAND PUPPETS!**

**HARLEY!** THEY  
ARE **MONEY PEOPLE!**  
YOU BRING THE WHOLE  
PUPPET SHOW  
IF NEEDED.

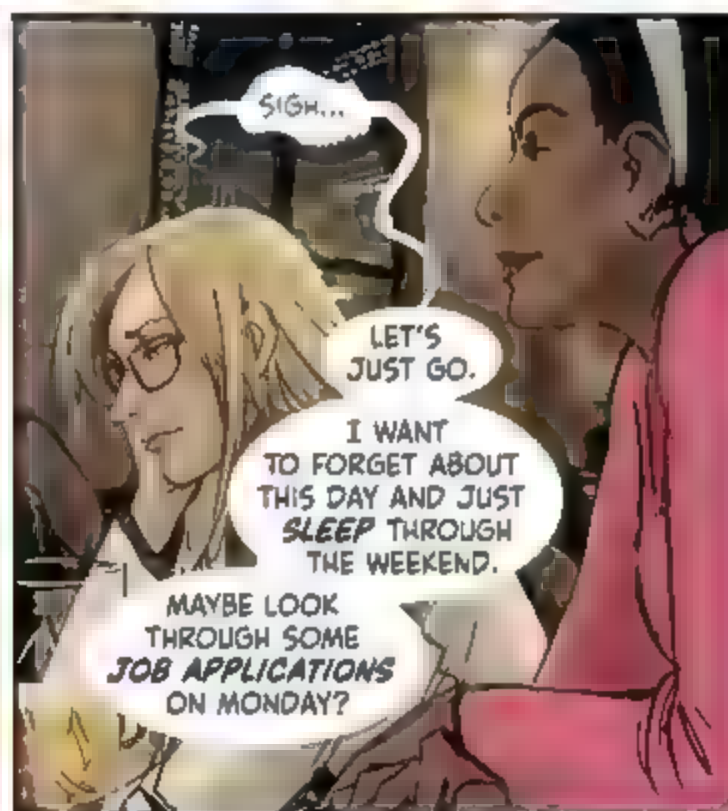
"THIS IS  
**STAB ME ELMO** AND  
HE NEEDS SERIOUS  
THERAPY!"



SHONDRA,  
I'M **SOOOO** NOT  
IN THE MOOD FOR  
THAT SHIT RIGHT  
NOW!

RIIIGHT,  
I'D SAY YOU'VE  
HAD ENOUGH  
OF **THIS!**

I'M  
NOT DRUNK! I'M  
**MISERABLE!**



SIGH...

LET'S  
JUST GO.

I WANT  
TO FORGET ABOUT  
THIS DAY AND JUST  
**SLEEP** THROUGH  
THE WEEKEND.

MAYBE LOOK  
THROUGH SOME  
**JOB APPLICATIONS**  
ON MONDAY?



SO WHAT ABOUT YOU? HOW  
DID YOUR THING GO?

HARLEEN,  
I'M PROPOSING  
**PHARMACEUTICAL**  
SOLUTIONS TO TREAT  
FORMS OF  
DEPRESSION.

THERE  
IS **MONEY**  
IN THAT!

MY PRESENTATION  
WENT **FLAWLESSLY.**



WOW...  
AND THEY USED  
TO CALL **ME**  
CYNICAL.

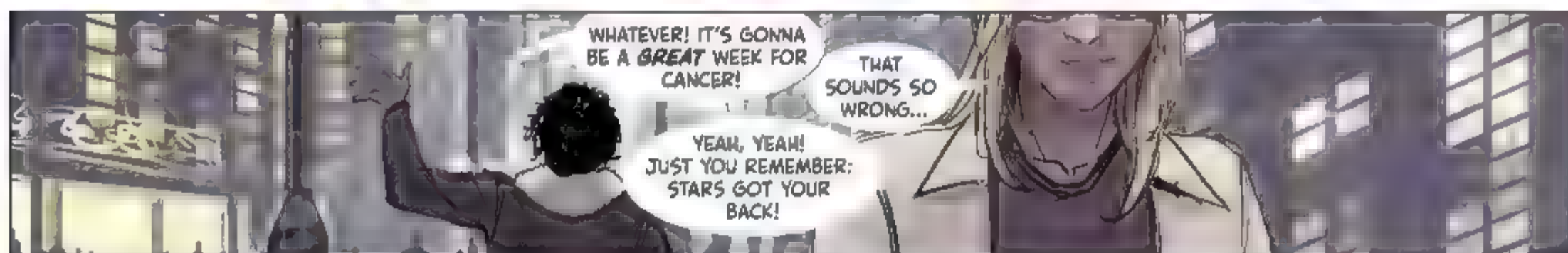
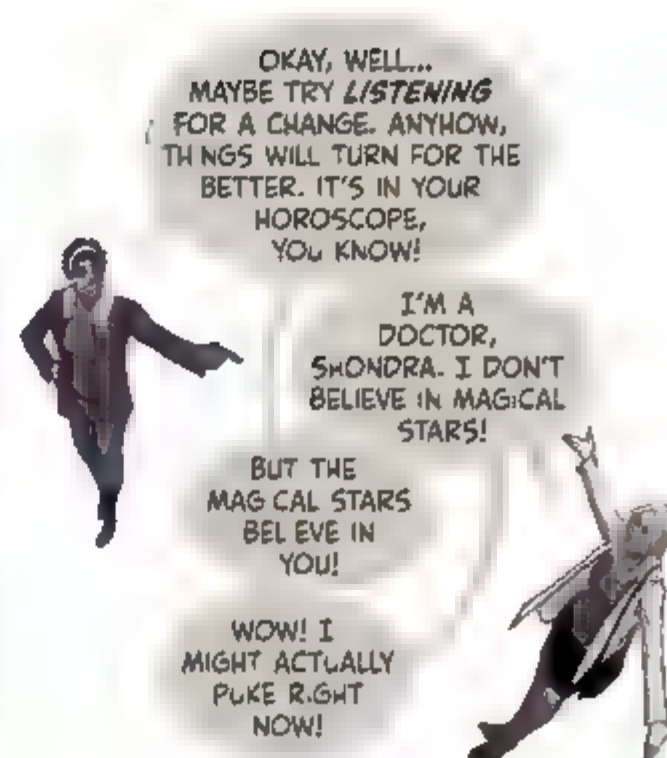
I SEEM TO  
REMEMBER PEOPLE  
CALLING YOU **MUCH**  
**WORSE** THAN  
THAT...

**LOW BLOW,**  
**SHONDRA!**

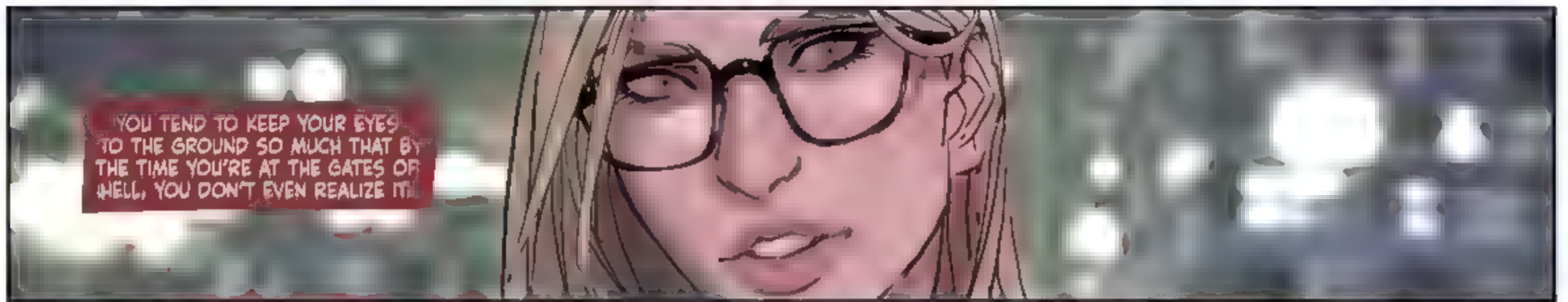
WHATEVER!  
ALL I'M SAYING IS IF  
YOU WANT THE RESEARCH  
CASH, YOU LEARN TO PLAY  
THE **MONEY CROWD.**

THE WAY I SEE IT,  
RICH FOLK HAVE LONG LINES OF  
ZEREOES ON THEIR BANK ACCOUNTS AND  
SHORT ATTENTION SPANS. SO, THE FIRST  
THING YOU GOTTA DO IS MAKE THEM  
SEE HOW YOUR THEORY WILL  
**MAKE MONEY.**











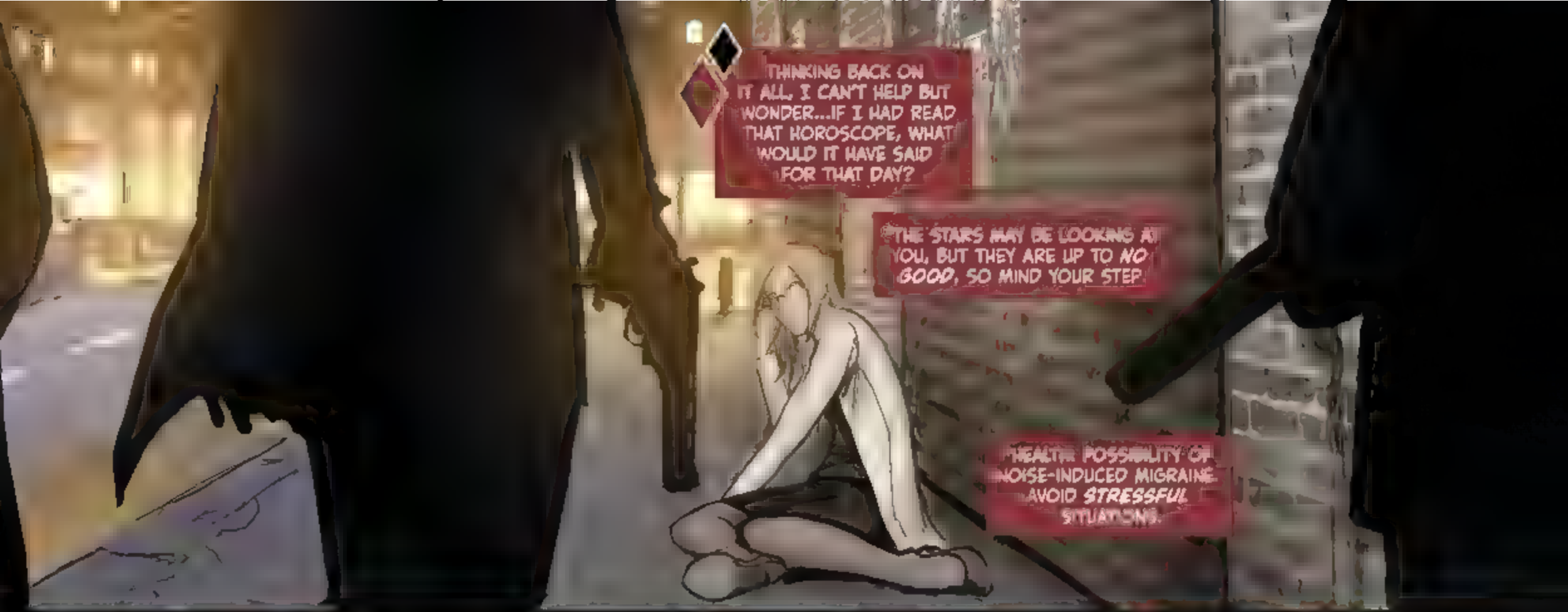
NOT EVEN WHEN  
THE DEVIL HIMSELF  
COMES TO GREET YOU

NOW WHAT  
DID I TELL YOU, BOYS?  
WHEN BUYING WEAPONS,  
THERE'S JUST NO BEATING  
**PERSONAL** QUALITY  
CONTROL!

WRAP  
IT ALL UP  
TO GO!







THINKING BACK ON  
IT ALL, I CAN'T HELP BUT  
WONDER...IF I HAD READ  
THAT HOROSCOPE, WHAT  
WOULD IT HAVE SAID  
FOR THAT DAY?

THE STARS MAY BE LOOKING AT  
YOU, BUT THEY ARE UP TO NO  
GOOD, SO MIND YOUR STEP.

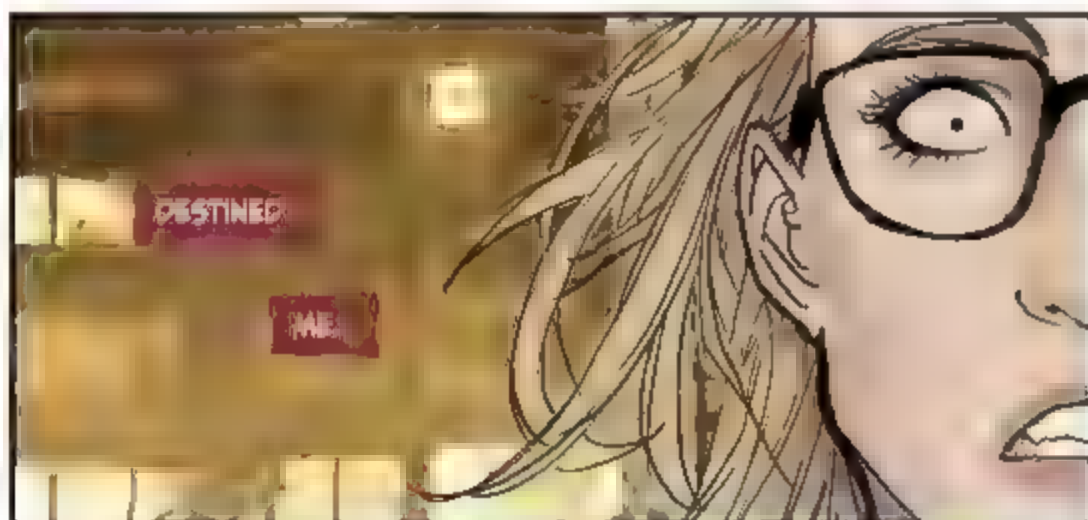
HEALTHY POSSIBILITY OF  
NOISE-INDUCED MIGRAINE.  
AVOID **STRESSFUL**  
SITUATIONS.



PROMANCE: MR. TALL-DARK-AND-HANDSOME  
IS JUST **AROUND THE CORNER** TO SWEEP  
YOU OFF INTO A LIFE OF ADVENTURE.

"YOUR LUCKY  
NUMBER IS FOUR."

I MEAN, TRUTH BE TOLD, IF I WAS  
A SUPERSTITIOUS PERSON I WOULD  
HAVE CALLED US **STAR-CROSSED**.



DESTINED

ME



AND HIM.

THE MAN I WOULD  
SOON LOVE.



PICKED  
A HELL OF A  
NIGHT FOR A  
WALK!

IT...WASN'T LOVE AT  
FIRST SIGHT, MIND YOU.





IN FACT LOVE NEVER  
CROSSING MY MIND  
WHAT DID CROSS MY MIND  
HOWEVER, WAS A WHOLE  
LIFETIME OF DECISIONS

WHAT WOULD  
YOU LIKE TO BE  
WHEN YOU GROW  
UP?  
A  
TEACHER

A  
SINGER?

I DON'T  
KNOW.

I SAID  
I DON'T  
KNOW!

MAYBE

I MEAN,  
I ACTUALLY KIND  
OF LIKE LISTENING  
TO MY FRIENDS  
PROBLEMS

GOOD DECISION

A  
SHRINK?

I MEAN, I DON'T GET HOW  
YOU'RE STILL SMOKE AT  
NINETEEN.  
BECAUSE  
GUYS MY AGE  
ARE IMMATURE  
JACKASSES!

YOU'RE  
INTO OLDER  
GUYS?  
SHUT  
UP!

GOOD DECISION

MISS  
QUINZEL

YOUR  
GRADES ARE IN  
THE TOP PERCENTILE.  
I DON'T UNDERSTAND  
WHY YOU KEEP ASKING  
FOR MY HELP  
THIS  
STUFF SHOULD  
BE SIMPLE FOR YOU

IT IS,  
IT'S JUST  
I LIKE  
UM...  
I LIKE SPENDING  
TIME WITH  
YOU

PROFESSOR  
COLLINS ARE  
YOU.  
OH GOD!

OH, THEY CALL HER  
HARLEY BECAUSE EVERY  
OLD DUDE IN A MID-LIFE  
CRISIS HAS RIDDEN HER  
SKANKY ASS.

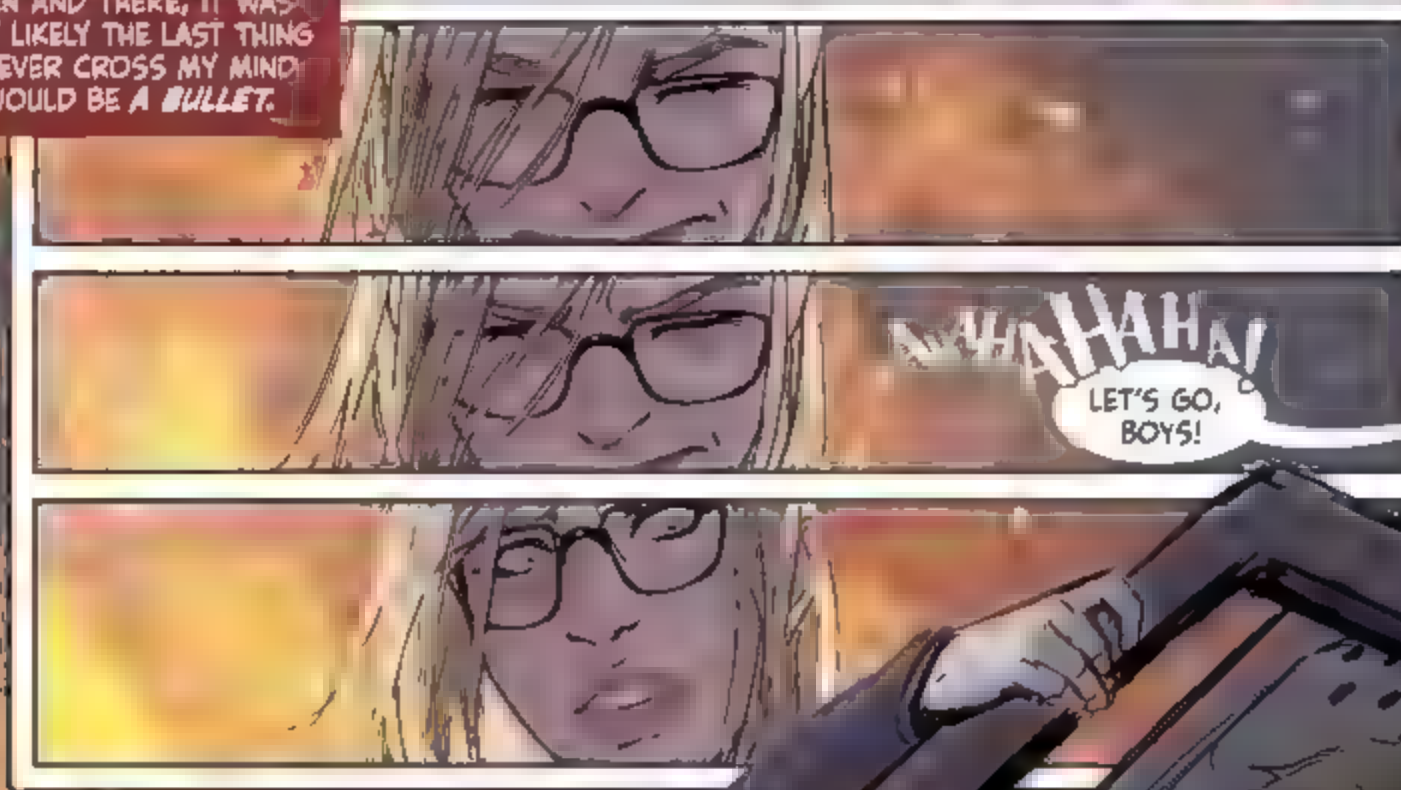
REAL  
DR. QUINZEL, YOU'RE  
HIRED.

I ... BE DAMNED!  
HARLEY! HEH, GUESS  
YOUR PART CLEAR SET  
OF SKILLS GOT  
YOU FAR!

DECIDING THIS IN THE END  
TO MAKE A CHOICE



BECAUSE LET'S BE HONEST:  
THEN AND THERE, IT WAS  
VERY LIKELY THE LAST THING  
TO EVER CROSS MY MIND  
WOULD BE A BULLET.



HAHAHA!  
LET'S GO,  
BOYS!

WE GOT  
SOME GIFTS TO  
UNWRAP, AND YOU  
KNOW HOW I LOVE  
THAT NEW GUN  
SMELL!



YOU BE  
CAREFUL OUT THERE,  
MA'AM! GOTHAM STREETS  
ARE DANGEROUS AT  
NIGHT, DON'T'CHA  
KNOW?

HAHAHA!

I REMEMBER IT CLEARLY:  
MY HEART BEATING ITS  
WAY THROUGH MY CHEST  
MY EARS RINGING.

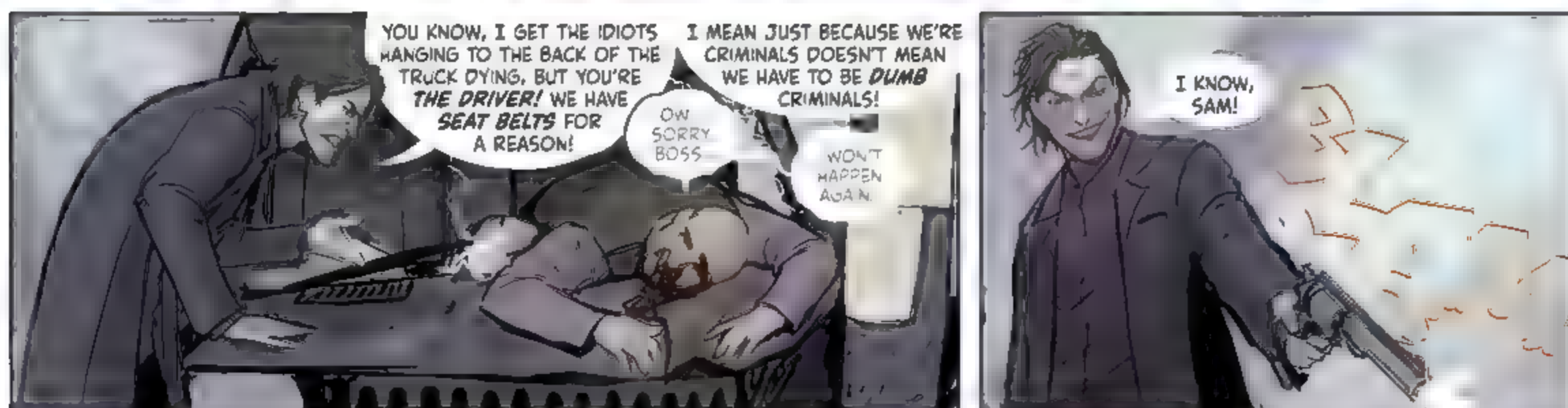
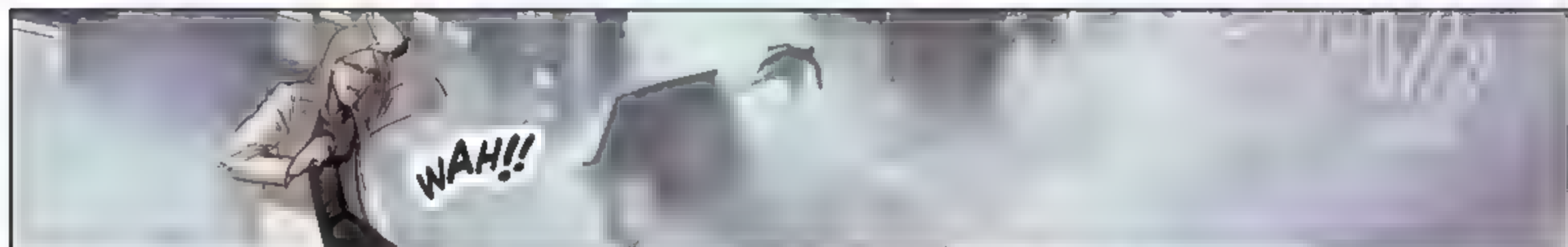
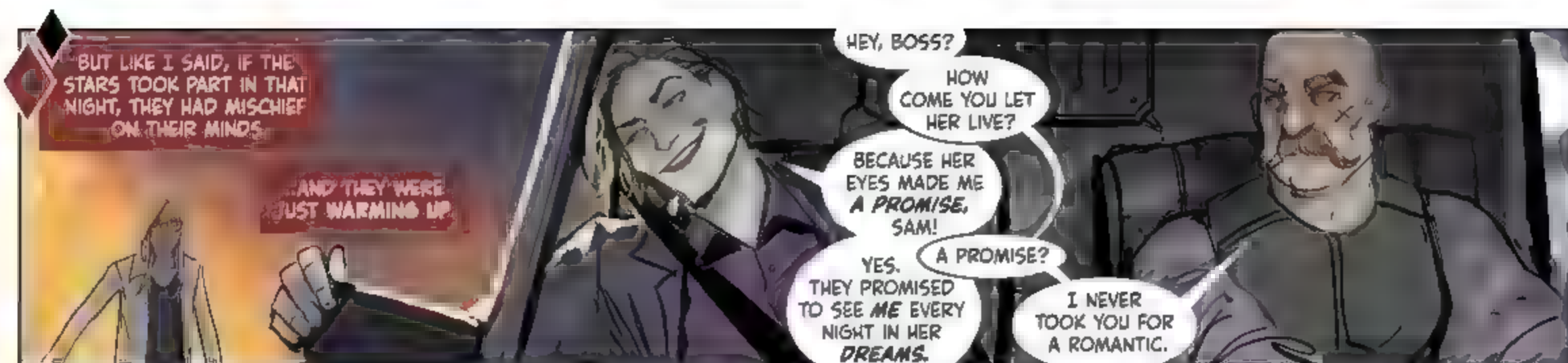
I'M FROZEN IN THE STREET.  
DEATH HAS PASSED ME.

IT'S DONE...

IT'S DONE.

THE WORST OF  
IT IS DONE!









BOB, YOU'RE MY  
NUMBER ONE GUY  
NOW!

UH...OKAY,  
BOSS!

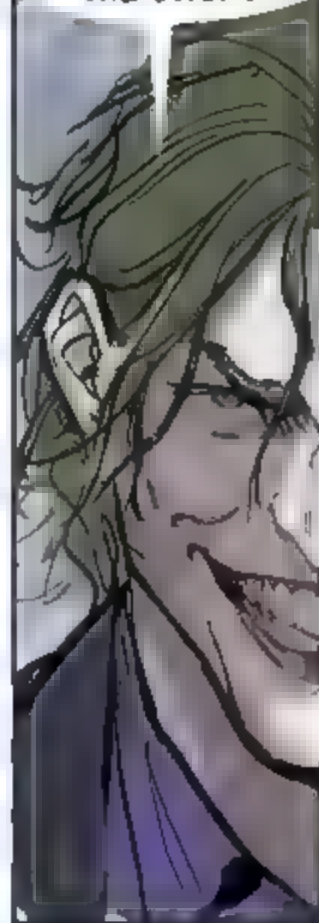
ANYWAYS, MY  
APOLOGIES, BATSI I HAD SOME  
COMPANY RESTRUCTURING TO DO,  
BUT NOW YOU HAVE MY **FULL  
ATTENTION!** HOW MAY I  
ASSIST YOU?

**DROP THE  
WEAPONS!**

JUST LIKE THAT,  
HUH? SERIOUSLY? WHEN  
HAS THAT **EVER** WORKED  
FOR YOU?

I MEAN,  
YOU GOT YOUR MEAN BAT-  
PLANE THING...WHAT'S IT GONNA  
BE? YOU GONNA OPEN FIRE  
ON US? GONNA START  
**KILLIN'?**

POINT I'M MAKING  
IS...WE GOT OUR  
CARROT, SO WHERE'S  
**THE STICK?**



IT'S MORE  
OF A BAT,  
REALLY.



**HA!** AND  
THEY SAY YOU DON'T  
HAVE A SENSE OF  
HUMOR!



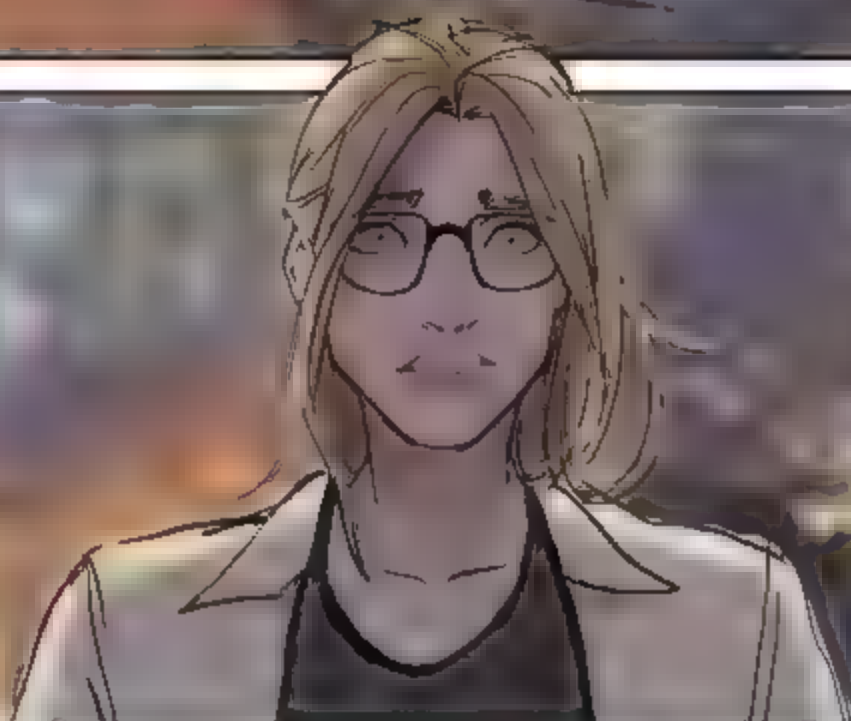
I REMEMBER  
ONE THOUGHT RUNNING  
THROUGH MY DAZED MIND.

I'M TRAPPED...

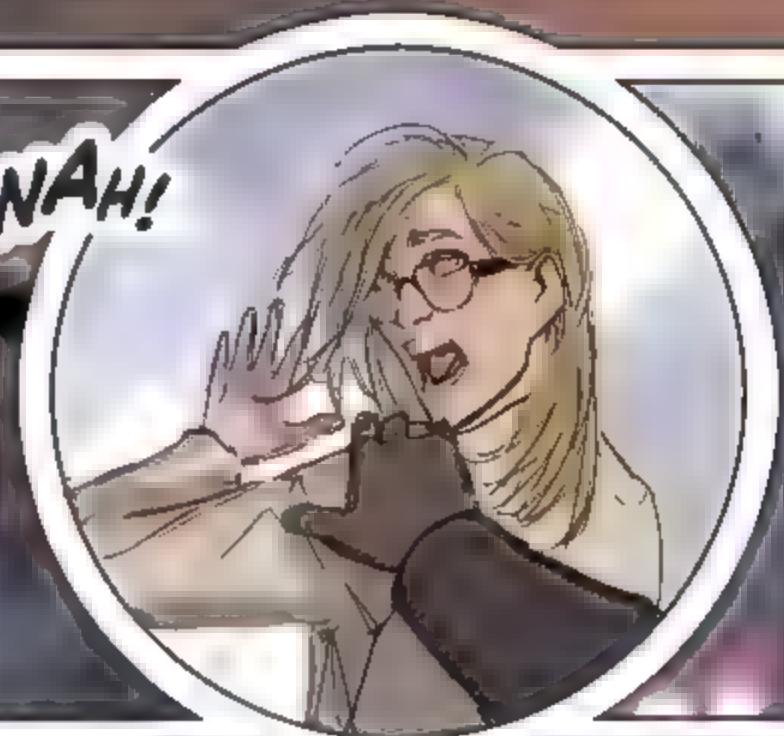
I'M TRAPPED BETWEEN  
SMOKE AND FIRE.



AND I AM  
TERRIFIED.



WAH!



WHOA,  
LADY! CALM  
DOWN!  
GOOD  
GUYS HERE!

OH THANK  
GOD!



CAN  
YOU WALK ALL  
RIGHT?

Y-YEAH?

GOOD. I'LL  
NEED YOU TO KEEP  
YOUR HEAD DOWN AND  
FOLLOW US! CAN YOU  
DO THAT?

FOLLOW  
YOU WHERE?

THE  
FUCK OUTTA  
HERE.

WE'RE  
GOING FOR THE  
SUBWAY ENTRANCE  
AROUND THE  
CORNER.

THAT'S...  
THAT'S ACROSS  
THE ROAD?



SHIT!

NGH...  
THERE'S STILL  
MUNITIONS IN THAT  
ALLEY...GOD KNOWS  
WHAT ELSE CAN  
GO OFF.

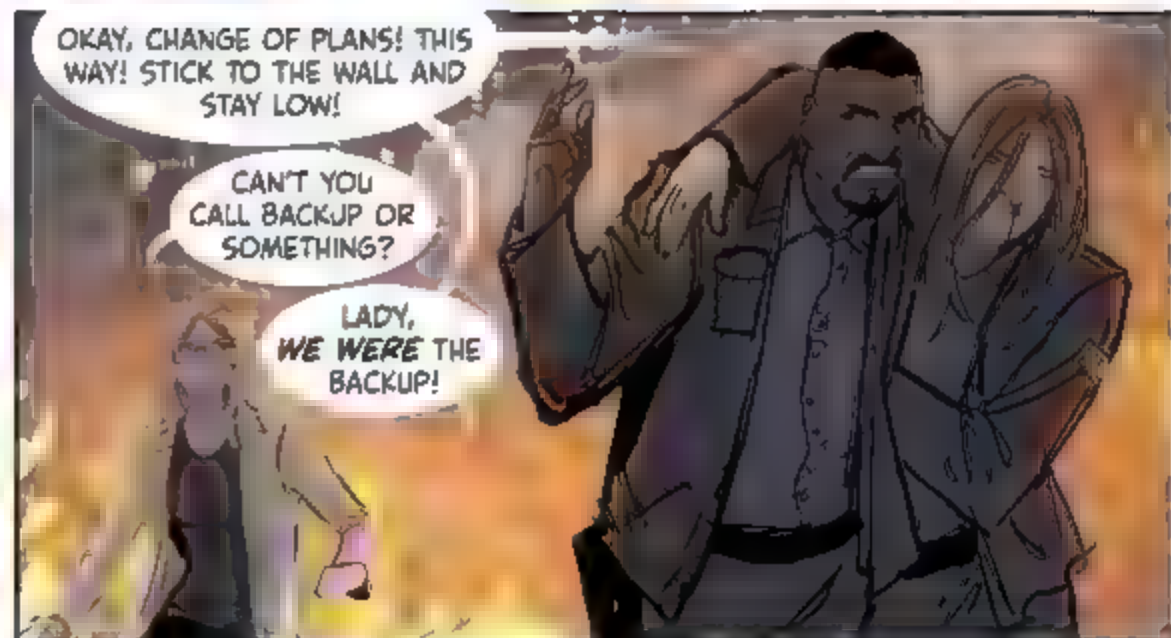
WE TRY  
TO CROSS  
NOW, WE MIGHT  
GET CAUGHT IN  
ANOTHER  
BLAST.



OKAY, CHANGE OF PLANS! THIS  
WAY! STICK TO THE WALL AND  
STAY LOW!

CAN'T YOU  
CALL BACKUP OR  
SOMETHING?

LADY,  
WE WERE THE  
BACKUP!







AS WE PASSED THE SMOKE,  
CROUCHING AND DESPERATELY  
HUGGING THE WALL, WE COULD  
SEE GLIMPSES OF THEM.

IN THAT MIST, THERE WERE MONSTERS AND  
SIRENS AND THINGS WITH WINGS AND TEETH.



THERE WERE NIGHTMARES IN THERE!

HEY, BAT!  
YOU GOT US  
BLINDED?  
WELL HOW'S  
THIS FOR ECHO-  
LOCATION? **MAKE  
SOME NOISE,  
BOYS!**



HEY!



THAT'S  
IT! SMOKE  
HIM!



FINE...  
**ONE-ON-ONE  
THEN.**

I HAD EVERY  
INTENTION OF PAINTING  
THE TOWN RED TONIGHT.  
MIGHT AS WELL DO  
IT WITH **YOUR  
BLOOD!**





I WAS LIKE A KID IN A HORROR STORY  
STANDING IN FRONT OF AN ABANDONED  
RAILWAY TUNNEL. I KNEW SOMETHING  
WAS LOOKING AT ME FROM INSIDE OF IT

WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING?!  
HURRY UP!

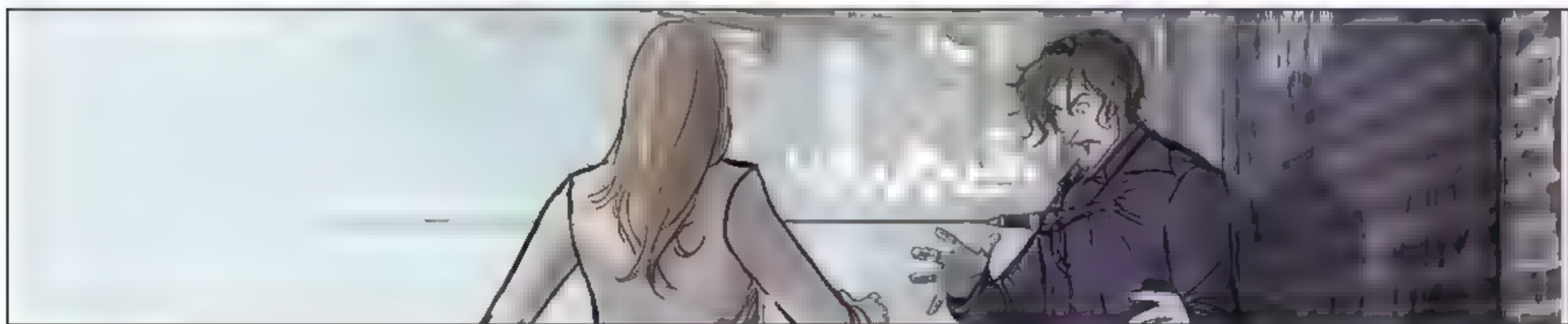
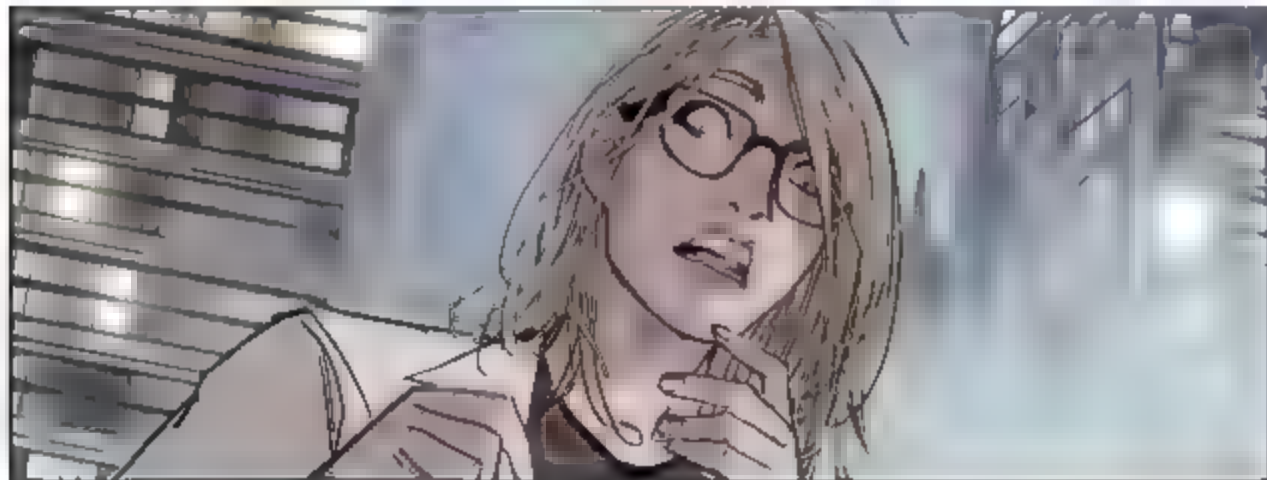
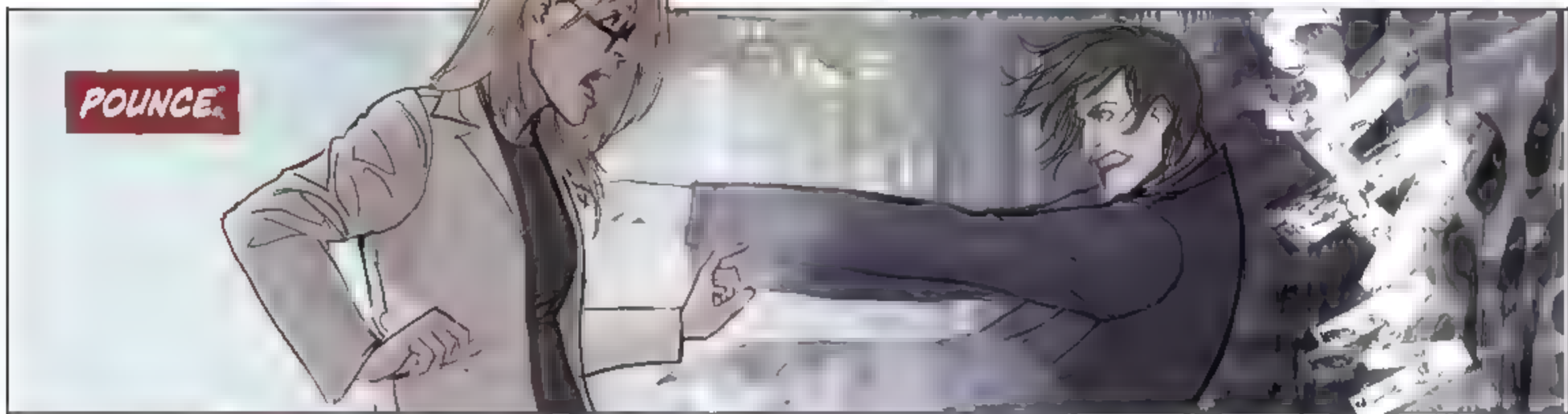
I CAN'T.

THERE WAS A MALEVOLENCE  
IN THE MIST, WATCHING...

AND I JUST KNEW IF I MADE A  
SINGLE MOVE IT WAS GOING TO...



POUNCE.







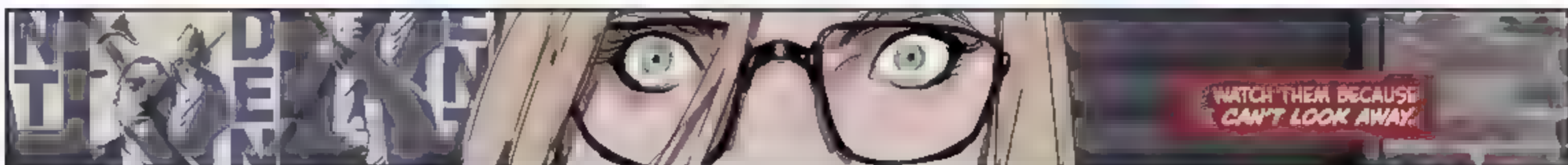
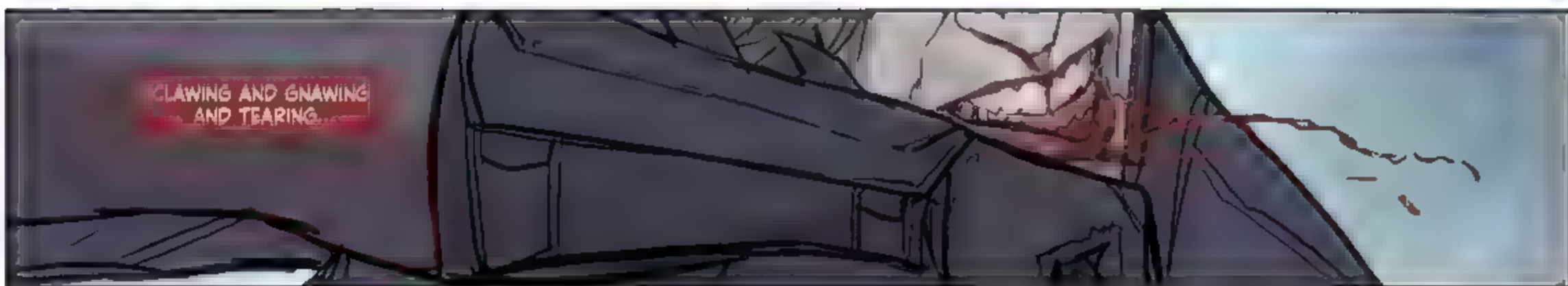
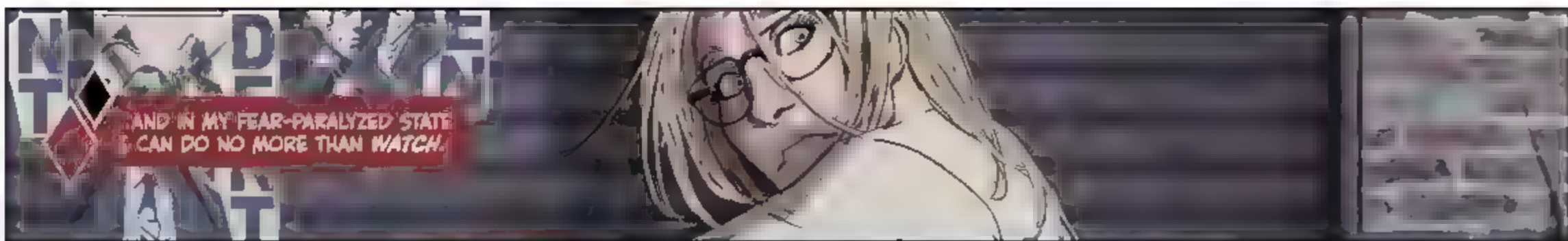
THERE ARE NO MORE GUNSHOTS, AND YET  
THIS SILENCE FEELS EVEN MORE TERRIFYING.

IT IS A SILENCE OF  
ANTICIPATION.

IT'S LIKE THE MOMENT JUST AFTER A  
FLASH OF LIGHTNING IN THE DISTANCE.

AND THEN IT COMES. A CRACK IN THE AIR.  
SOUND LIKE A MASSIVE PLAS FIGHTING  
BURST OF WIND, AND FOLLOWING IT...  
SINISTER LAUGH.







THEY, HOWEVER, PAY  
NO ATTENTION TO ME!

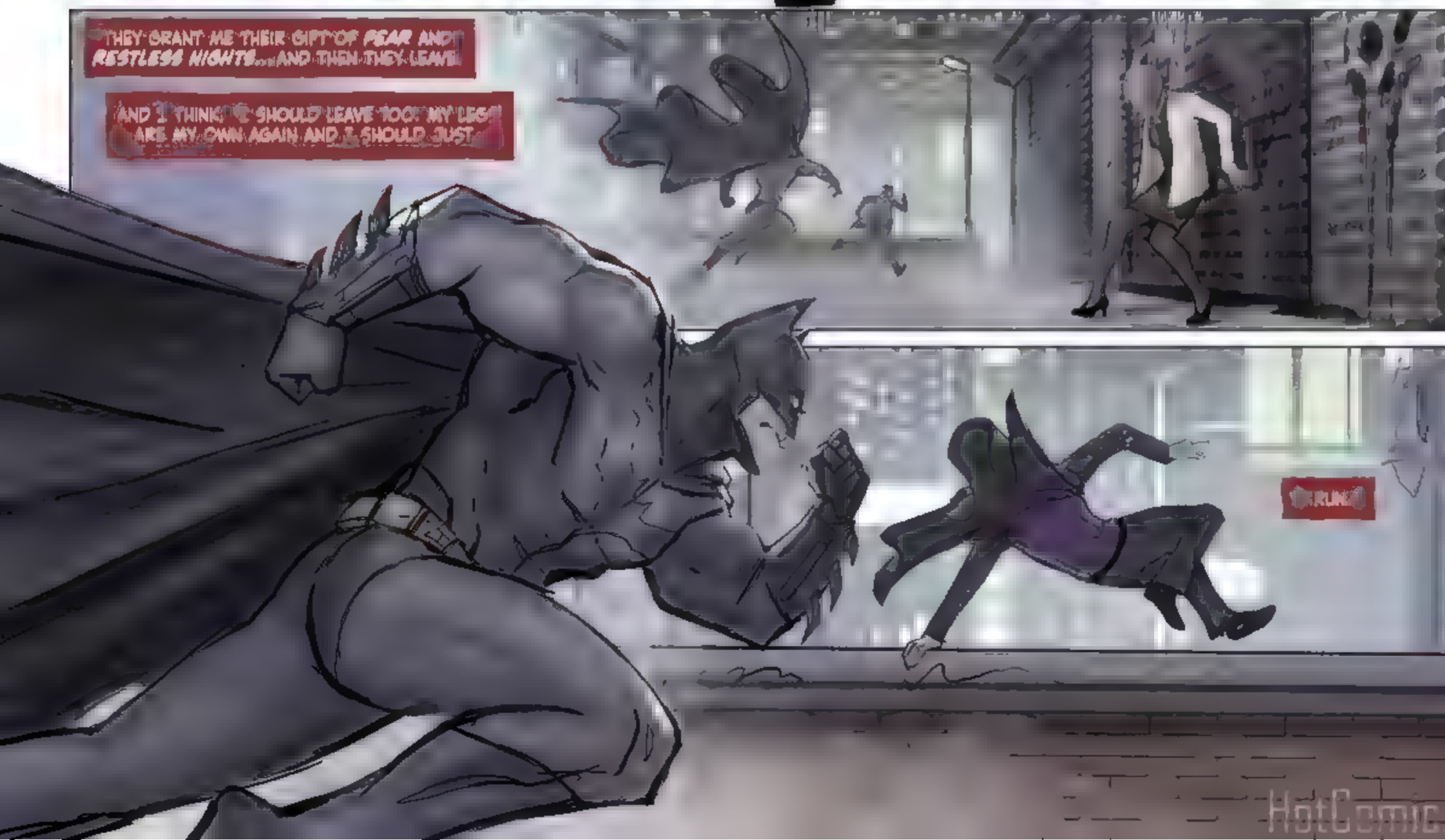


IN FACT, THEIR WORK  
WITH ME IS DONE.



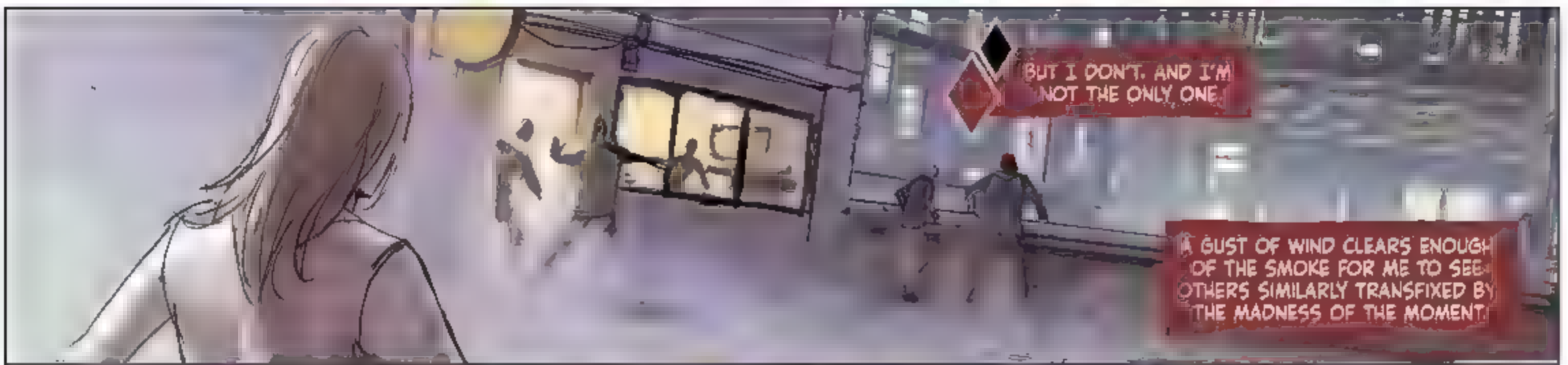
THEY GRANT ME THEIR GIFT OF FEAR AND  
RESTLESS NIGHTS...AND THEN THEY LEAVE.

AND I THINK I SHOULD LEAVE TOO. MY LEGS  
ARE MY OWN AGAIN AND I SHOULD JUST



RLING





BUT I DON'T. AND I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE.

A GUST OF WIND CLEARS ENOUGH OF THE SMOKE FOR ME TO SEE OTHERS SIMILARLY TRANSFIXED BY THE MADNESS OF THE MOMENT.



I SHOULD BE RUNNING AWAY.

WE ALL SHOULD.

INSTEAD, WE RUSH TO THE RAILING TO SEE THE SPECTACLE, LIKE A BLOODTHIRSTY CROWD OF ANCIENT ROMANS.



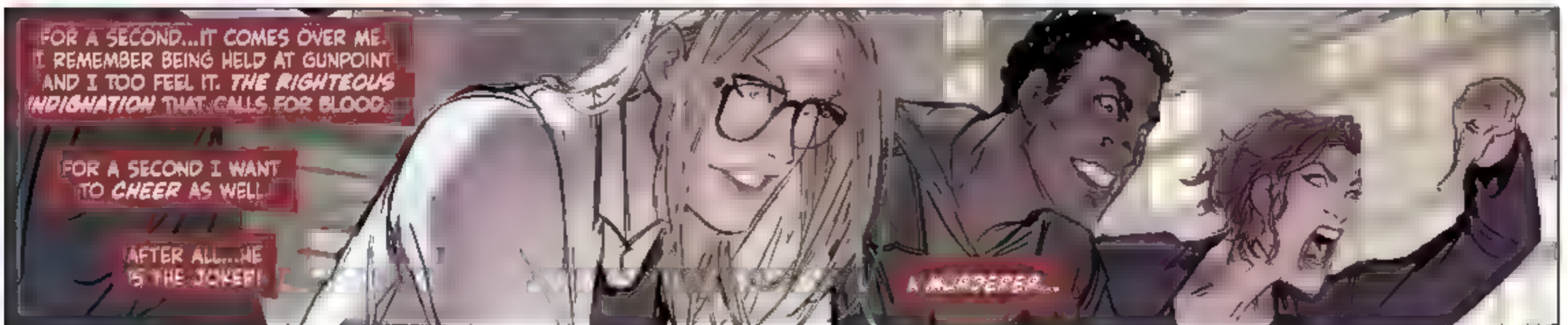
WE COME TO WATCH.



WE COME TO CHEER.



WE COME TO FEAST.



FOR A SECOND...IT COMES OVER ME. I REMEMBER BEING HELD AT GUNPOINT AND I TOO FEEL IT. THE RIGHTEOUS INDIGNATION THAT CALLS FOR BLOOD.

FOR A SECOND I WANT TO CHEER AS WELL.

AFTER ALL...HE IS THE JOKER!

A MURDERER...



BUT I'M SNAPPED  
OUT OF IT BY A  
STRANGE THOUGHT

I'DROWNED OUT  
THE SOUND

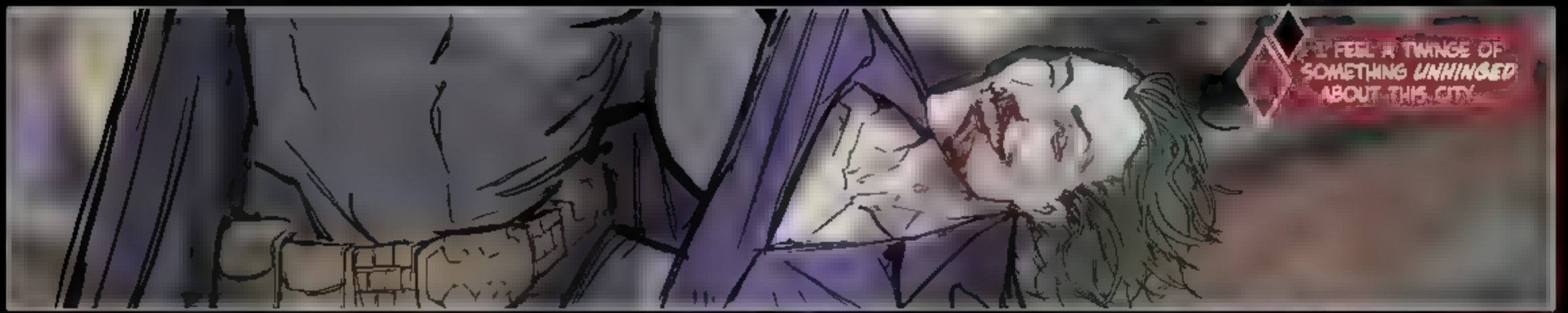
THE CHEERING  
DROWNED OUT THE  
SOUND OF THE FIST  
CONNECTING

INSTEAD OF SICKENING  
CRUNCHES, THE SOUNDS  
HIS PUNCHES MADE  
WERE

FOR THE FIRST TIME  
EVER, I TRULY FEEL





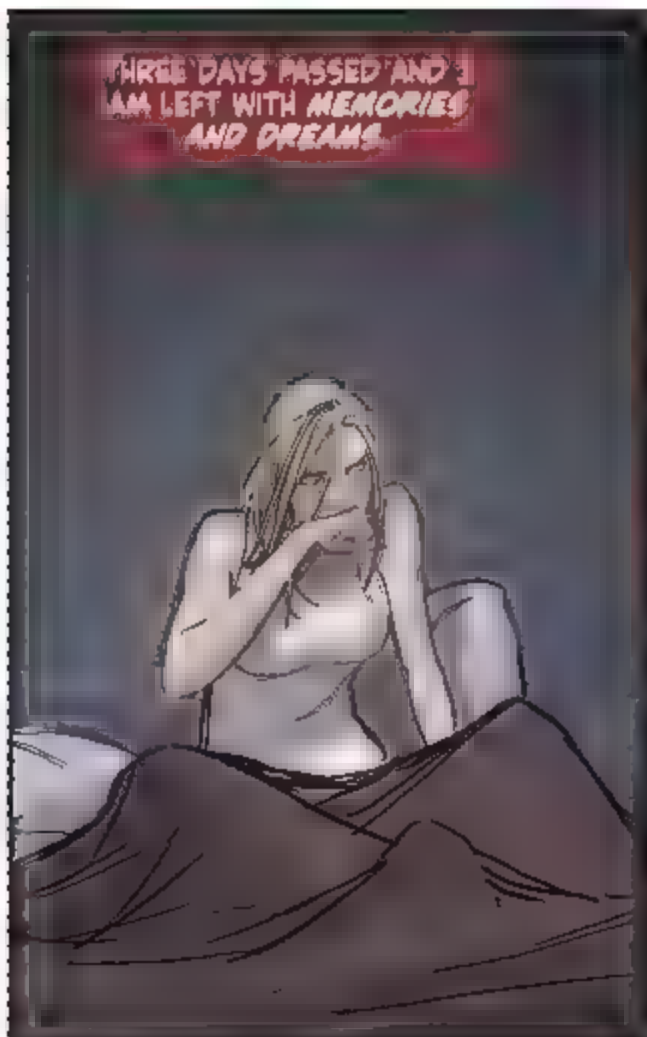


I FEEL A TWINGE OF  
SOMETHING UNHINGED  
ABOUT THIS CITY

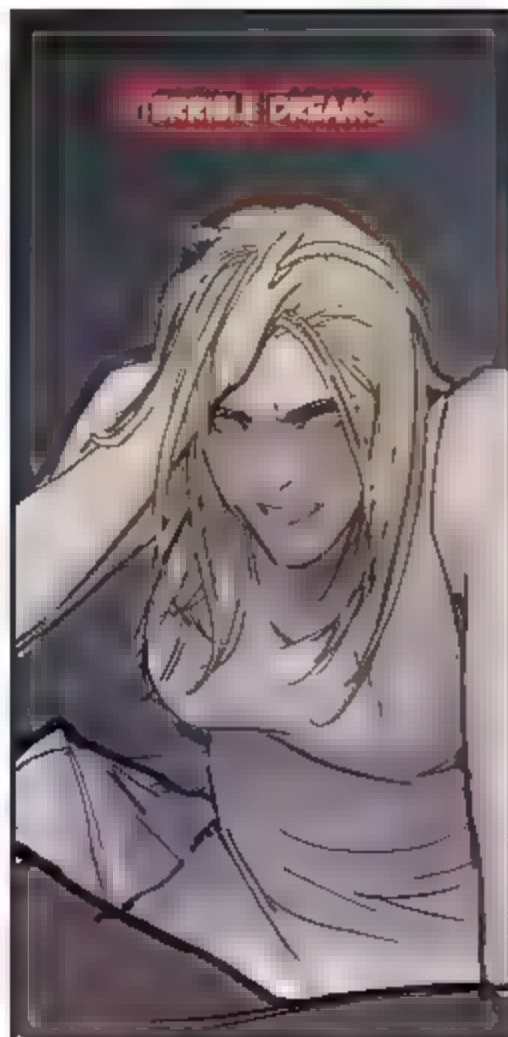


IT'S THE STUFF  
OF NIGHTMARES

AND I WANT  
TO SCREAM



THREE DAYS PASSED AND I  
AM LEFT WITH MEMORIES  
AND DREAMS



TERRIBLE DREAMS



STRESSFUL  
DREAMS



DREAMS THAT  
LINGER

AHA  
HAHAHA  
HA..



# CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF CRIMINAL PSYCHOLOGY

Gotham City.

I DECIDED TO KEEP THE  
EVENTS OF THAT FATEFUL  
NIGHT TO MYSELF.

WHO KNOWS, MAYBE IF I HAD TOLD  
SOMEONE ABOUT THAT NIGHT, THINGS  
WOULD HAVE GONE DIFFERENTLY.

MY LIFE WOULD HAVE  
BEEN DIFFERENT.

BUT I KEPT QUIET. THE LAST FOUR  
YEARS WORKING AT THE CENTER  
TAUGHT ME TO KEEP MY HEAD DOWN.

TO NOT ATTRACT ATTENTION.

SEE...I HAD THIS FLING WITH A  
PROFESSOR BACK IN MY COLLEGE  
DAYS AND PEOPLE FOUND OUT ABOUT IT.

IT WAS ONE OF THOSE THINGS  
THAT TEND TO STICK TO YOU.

TEND TO...DEFINE YOU  
IN THE EYES OF SOME.

DIDN'T HELP THAT TWO OF THE  
PEOPLE WORKING AT THE CENTER  
HAD GONE TO SCHOOL WITH ME.

SUFFICE IT TO SAY, WORD GOT  
AROUND. AND I GAINED A...LET'S  
CALL IT A REPUTATION.

OKAY,  
WHO DID YOU  
\$%\$% TO  
GET IT?

HEY!

YOU KNOW WHAT? AFTER MY  
WEEKEND I'VE GOT **ZERO**  
**PATIENCE** FOR YOUR  
BULLSHIT, PAULINE!

OH, DON'T YOU  
GIVE ME THAT **CRAP!** HOW  
DID YOU **DO IT?** DID YOU **\$%\$**  
SOMEONE FROM THE FINANCE BOARD?

QUINZE., DR.  
MATHEWS'S OFFICE,  
NOW!

UH, DR. MATHEWS?





OH, I'M SORRY,  
I DIDN'T KNOW THERE WAS  
SOMEONE ELSE IN HERE. I'LL  
WAIT OUTSIDE.

NO, NO,  
QUINZEL! COME IN.  
WE'VE BEEN *WAITING*  
FOR YOU!



DR. QUINZEL?



HARLEEN, PLEASE!  
HEY, I *REMEMBER*  
YOU. YOU WERE AT MY  
PRESENTATION...AND  
THEN YOU *LEFT*.



GOOD MEMORY.



I'M GOOD WITH FACES. PLUS  
I TEND TO REMEMBER PEOPLE  
LEAVING MY PANEL WHEN I'M  
TRYING TO PRESENT MY  
LIFE'S WORK.  
ALL 28  
OF THEM...

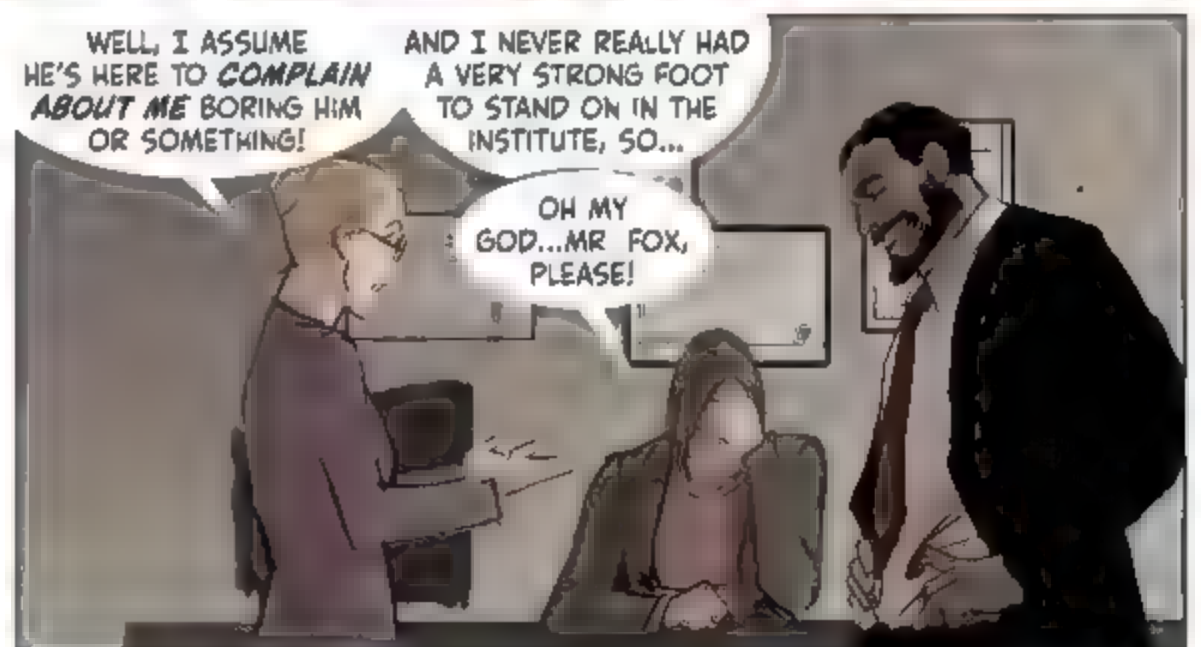


UH... SORRY  
I'M RAMBLING. I TEND  
TO DO THAT WHEN I'M  
NERVOUS.



AM I  
FIRED?

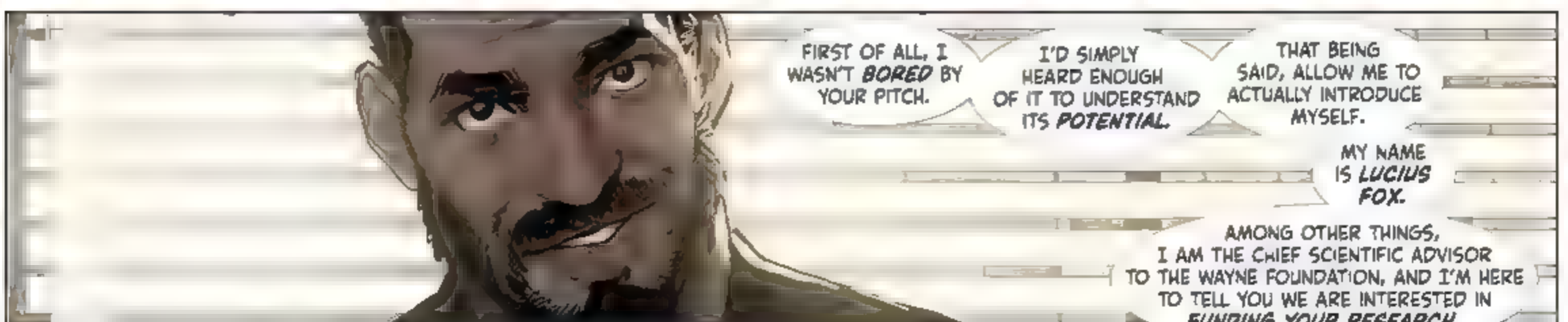
WHAT?



WELL, I ASSUME  
HE'S HERE TO *COMPLAIN*  
*ABOUT ME BORING HIM*  
OR SOMETHING!

AND I NEVER REALLY HAD  
A VERY STRONG FOOT  
TO STAND ON IN THE  
INSTITUTE, SO...

OH MY  
GOD...MR FOX,  
PLEASE!



FIRST OF ALL, I  
WASN'T *BORED* BY  
YOUR PITCH.

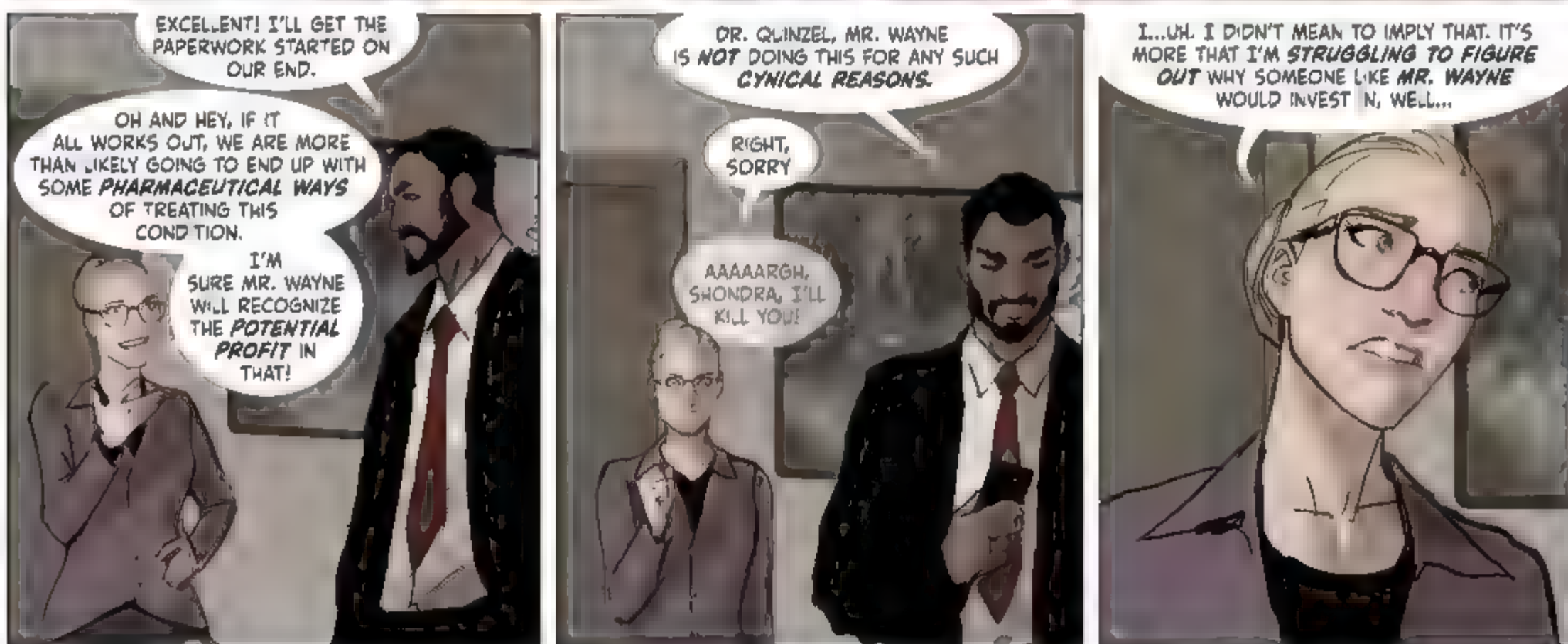
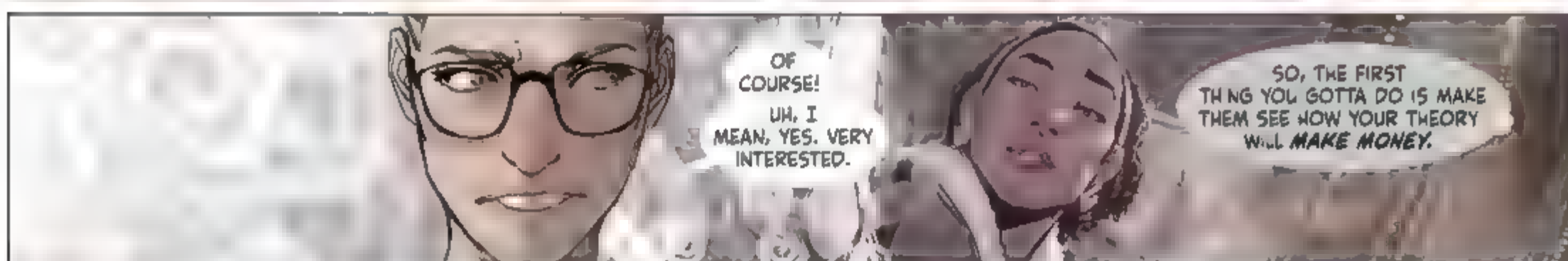
I'D SIMPLY  
HEARD ENOUGH  
OF IT TO UNDERSTAND  
ITS *POTENTIAL*.

THAT BEING  
SAID, ALLOW ME TO  
ACTUALLY INTRODUCE  
MYSELF.

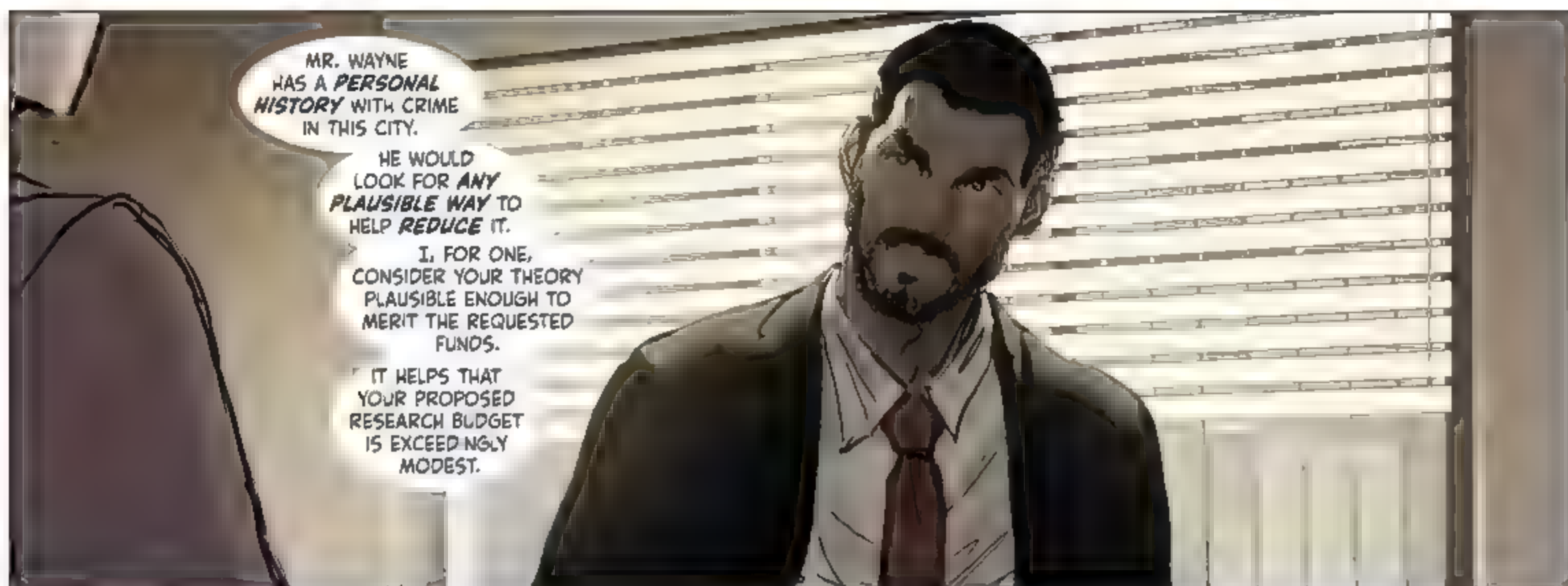
MY NAME  
IS *LUCIUS*  
*FOX*.

AMONG OTHER THINGS,  
I AM THE CHIEF SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR  
TO THE WAYNE FOUNDATION, AND I'M HERE  
TO TELL YOU WE ARE INTERESTED IN  
*FUNDING YOUR RESEARCH.*









MR. WAYNE  
HAS A **PERSONAL**  
**HISTORY** WITH CRIME  
IN THIS CITY.

HE WOULD  
LOOK FOR **ANY**  
**PLAUSIBLE** WAY TO  
HELP **REDUCE** IT.

I, FOR ONE,  
CONSIDER YOUR THEORY  
PLAUSIBLE ENOUGH TO  
MERIT THE REQUESTED  
FUNDS.

IT HELPS THAT  
YOUR PROPOSED  
RESEARCH BUDGET  
IS EXCEEDINGLY  
MODEST.



I MEAN...YEAH. THE ONLY  
REAL **COST** WILL BE THE  
SECOND PHASE WITH THE  
**BRAIN ACTIVITY**  
**NEUROIMAGING**.

EVERYTHING  
BEFORE THAT  
IS INTERVIEW  
WORK.

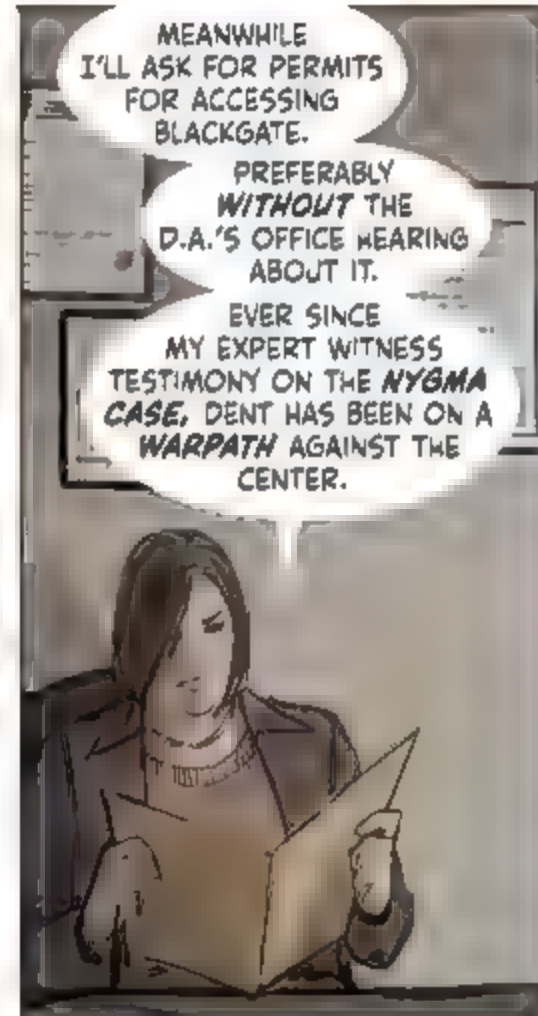


WHICH MEANS...OH GOD, NOW I GOTTA FIND  
OUT HOW TO ACTUALLY **GET ACCESS**  
TO ARKHAM, BLACKGATE, AND  
THE GOTHAM POLICE...

RELAX,  
DOCTOR

ARKHAM SHOULDN'T  
BE A **PROBLEM**. MR. WAYNE  
HAS **FUNDED** ITS REPAIRS  
AND SECURITY, SO THEY  
**OWE US**.

SAME GOES  
FOR THE GOTHAM PD.  
WE CAN MAKE SOME  
CALLS.



MEANWHILE  
I'LL ASK FOR PERMITS  
FOR ACCESSING  
BLACKGATE.

PREFERABLY  
**WITHOUT** THE  
D.A.'S OFFICE HEARING  
ABOUT IT.

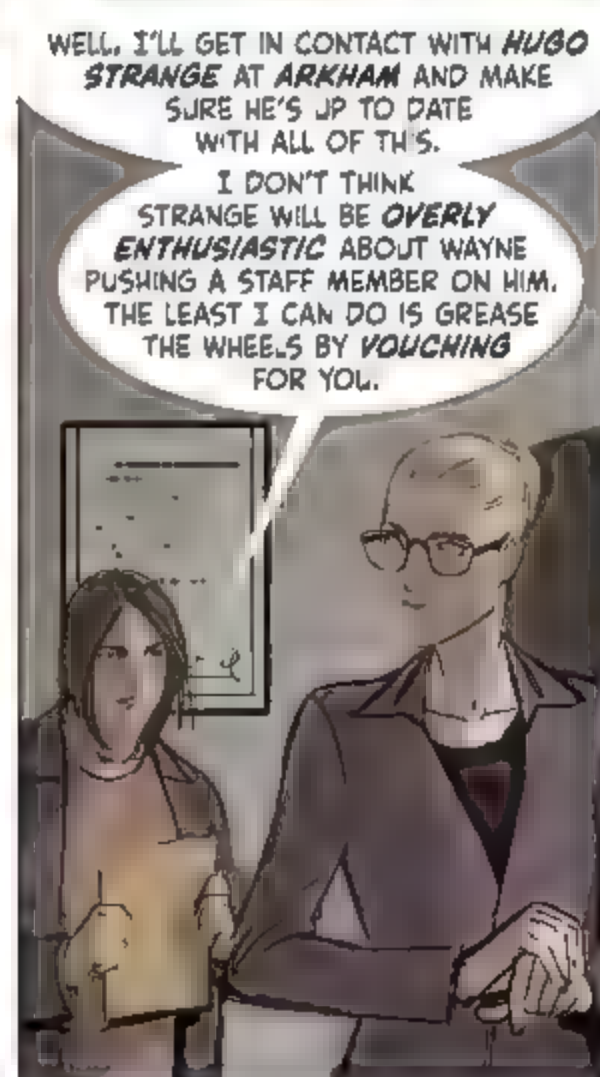
EVER SINCE  
MY EXPERT WITNESS  
TESTIMONY ON THE **HYGMA**  
**CASE**, DENT HAS BEEN ON A  
**WARPATH** AGAINST THE  
CENTER.



WELL, I SUPPOSE THAT'S  
SETTLED THEN. GOOD LUCK,  
DOCTOR. PLEASURE  
MEETING YOU!



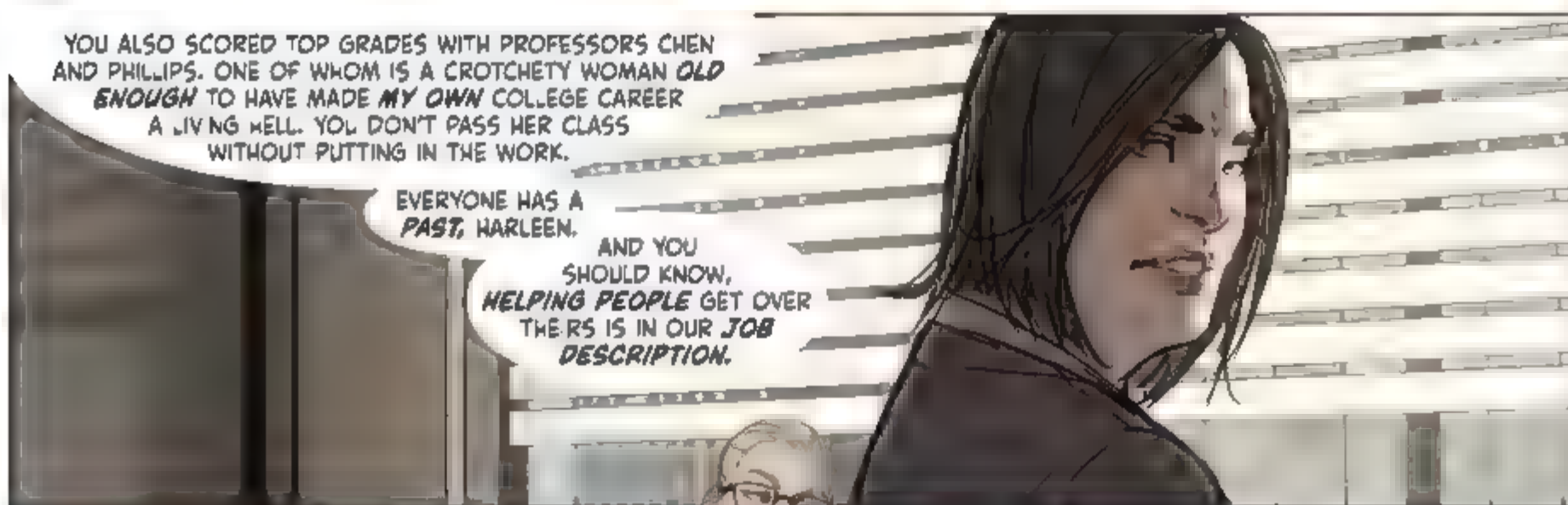
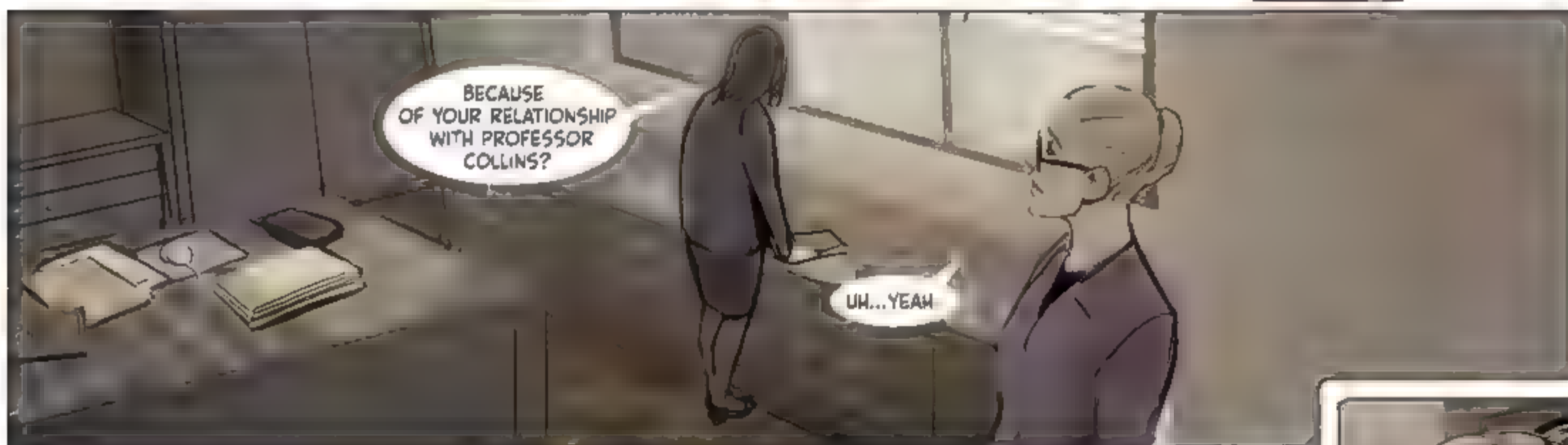
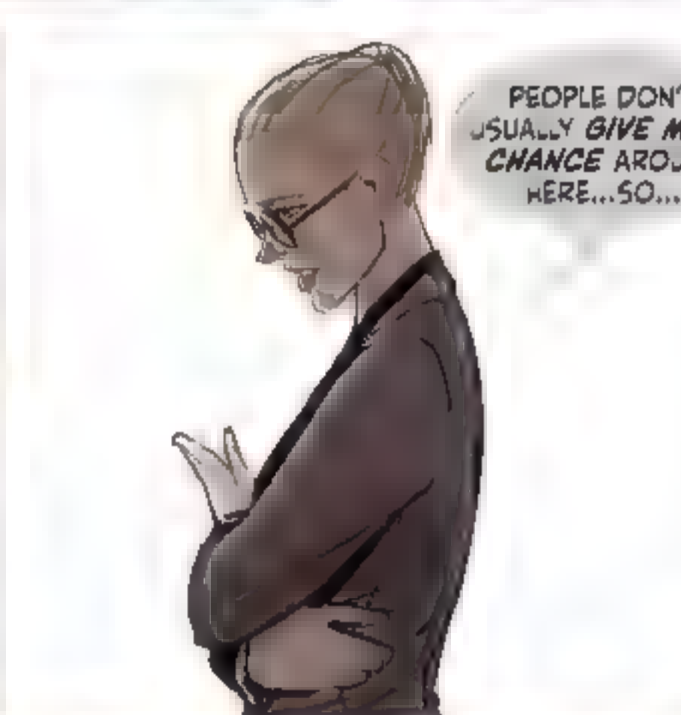
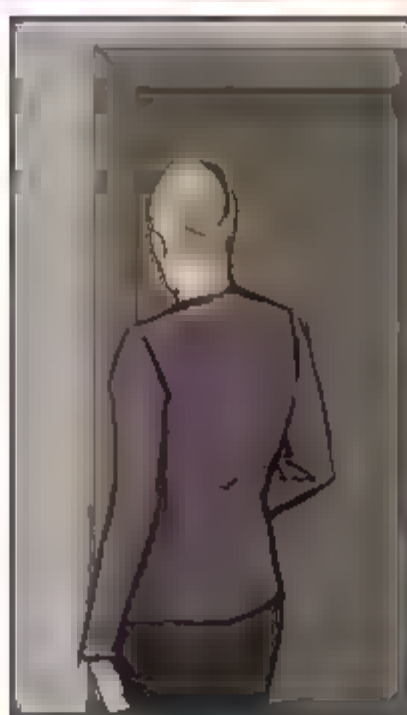
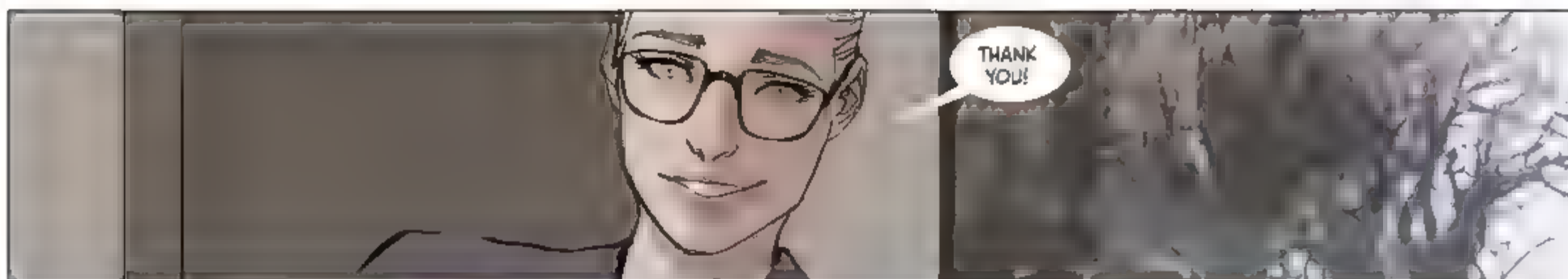
Y-YEAH...  
UH...LIKEWISE!



WELL, I'LL GET IN CONTACT WITH **HUGO**  
**STRANGE** AT ARKHAM AND MAKE  
SURE HE'S UP TO DATE  
WITH ALL OF THIS.

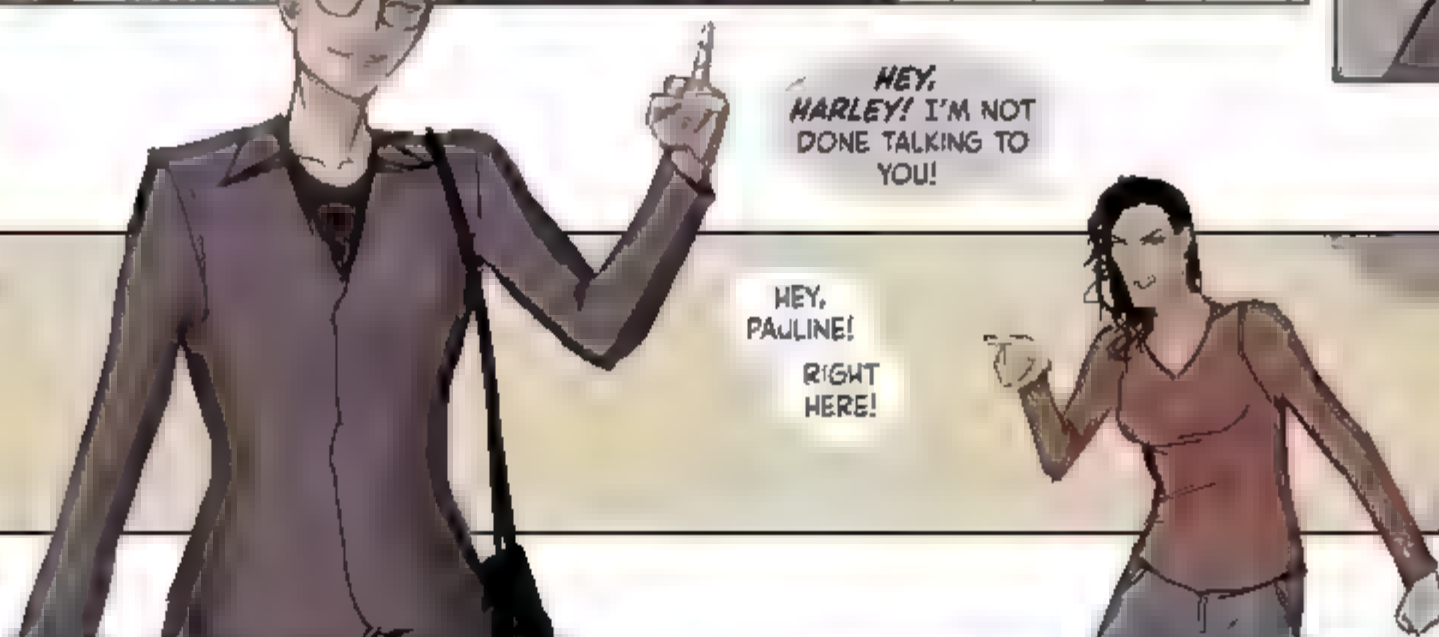
I DON'T THINK  
STRANGE WILL BE **OVERLY**  
**ENTHUSIASTIC** ABOUT WAYNE  
PUSHING A STAFF MEMBER ON HIM.  
THE LEAST I CAN DO IS GREASE  
THE WHEELS BY **VOUCHING**  
FOR YOU.





EVERYONE HAS A PAST, HARLEEN. AND YOU SHOULD KNOW, HELPING PEOPLE GET OVER THEIRS IS IN OUR JOB DESCRIPTION.

AND THERE IT WAS. ONE THING WENT RIGHT FOR ME, AND ONE PERSON HAD MY BACK, AND I FELT LIKE A MILLION DUCKS.



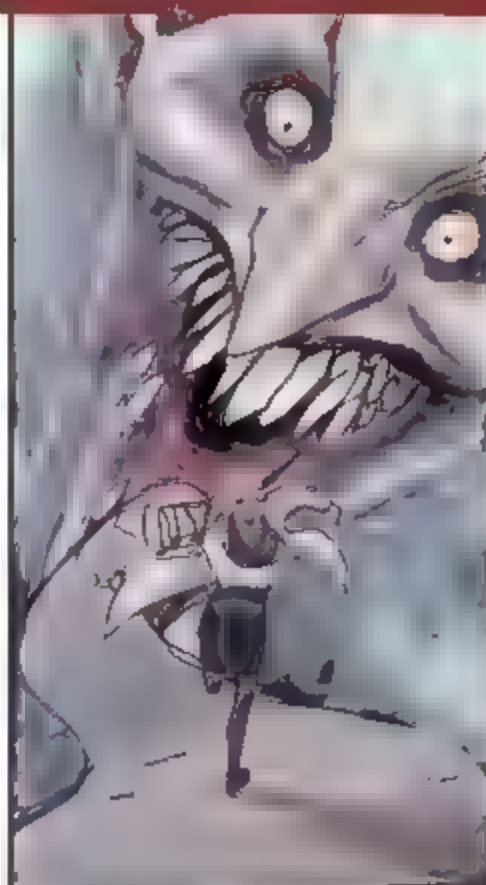


IT TOOK TWO WEEKS  
FOR MY TRANSFER  
TO BE CLEARED, AND  
YOU KNOW WHAT?

I HAD NO  
PROBLEM  
WITH THAT.

AFTER ALL, I HAD  
EARNED MY MOMENT  
OF GLOATING, AND YOU  
BETTER BELIEVE I WAS  
GOING TO ENJOY IT!

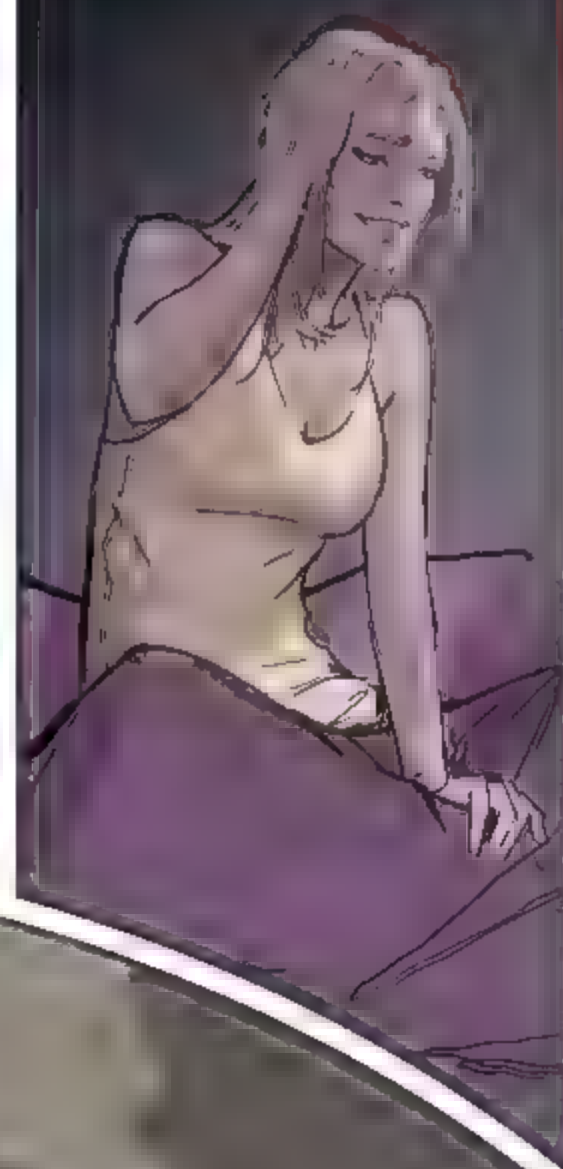
AND THAT WASN'T THE ONLY  
IMPROVEMENT: MY PREVIOUSLY  
SHIT-YOUR-PANTS-TERRIFYING  
NIGHTMARES SUBSIDED.



BY WEEK TWO, THEY  
WERE REPLACED BY BRIEF,  
UNSETTLING DREAMS.

IN THEM, THE MIST WAS STILL  
THERE. BUT THE MONSTERS  
SEEMED ABSENT.

AND I WAS VERY MUCH  
OKAY WITH THAT, TOO.



THE DAY I LEFT  
THE INSTITUTE WAS  
A HAPPY DAY.

I FELT LIKE I WAS LEAVING  
ALL THE BULLSHIT BEHIND  
ME AND I WAS WALKING TO  
A BRIGHT FUTURE.

I GUESS THERE IS SOMETHING  
TO BE SAID ABOUT WALKING  
TOWARD THE LIGHT.

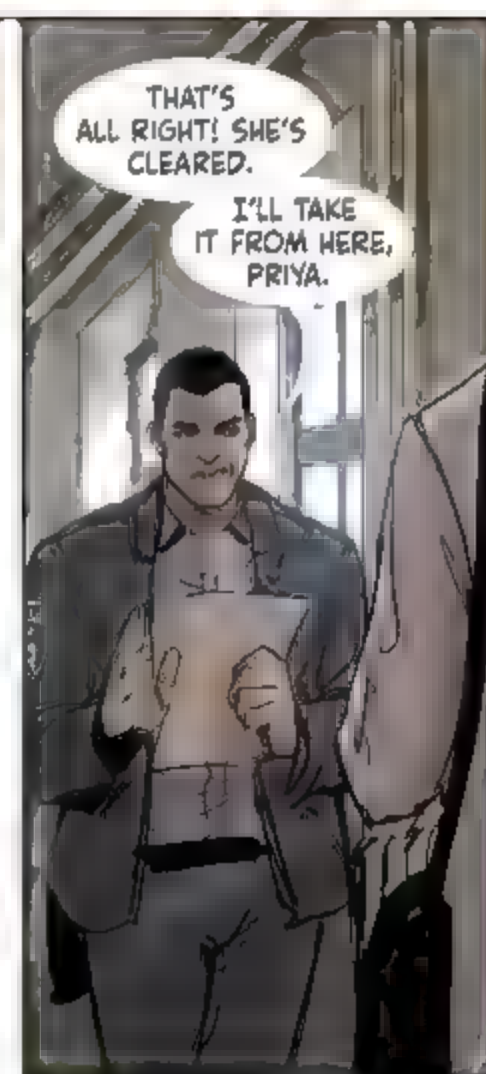
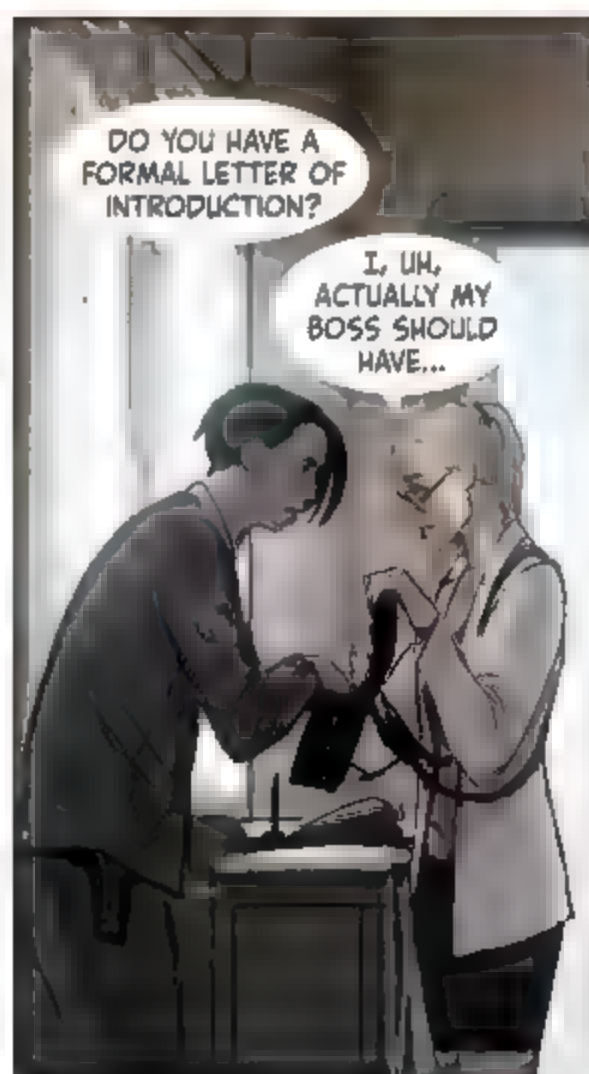
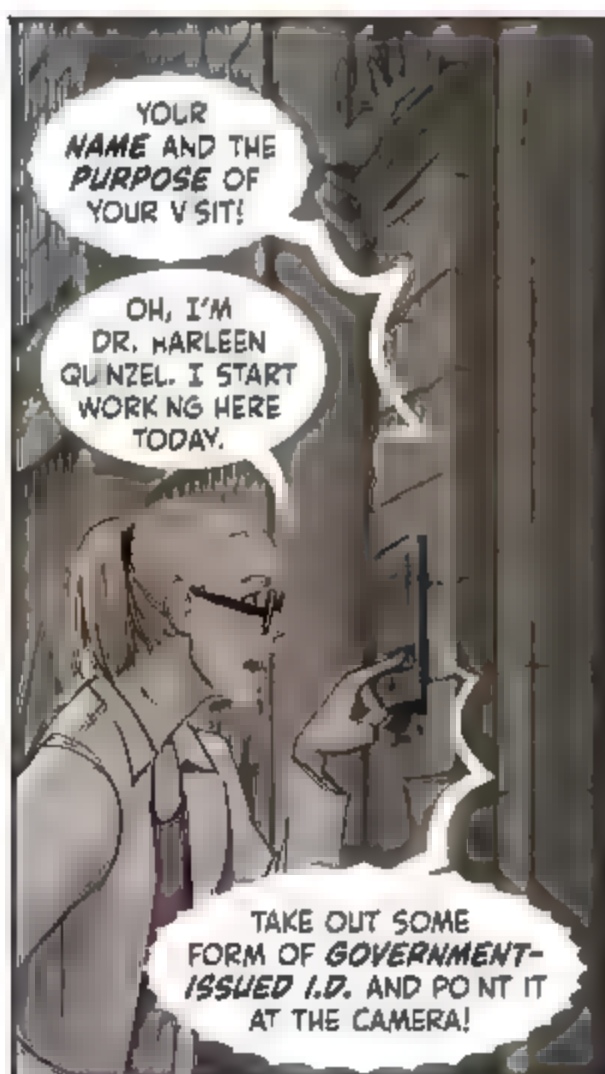
YOU TEND NOT TO NOTICE THE  
SHAPE OF YOUR OWN SHADOW.

I KNEW NOTHING OF MY FUTURE.  
STARING AT THE LIGHT, I CARED  
LITTLE ABOUT THE SHADOWS.  
ALL I KNEW.





5 WAS THAT I FINALLY MADE IT.







HEY, DR  
UH...QUINTZLE? IS  
THAT RIGHT?

IT'S QUINZEL.  
HARLEEN QUINZEL.



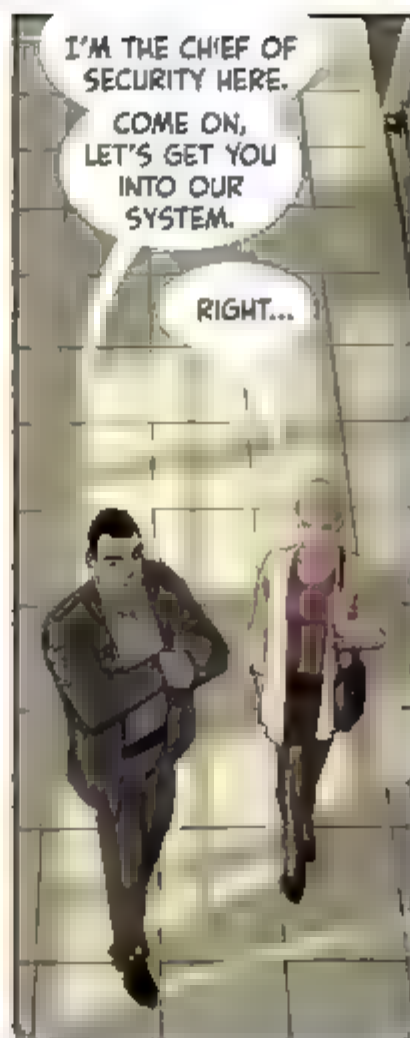
ODD NAME.

MIDDLE NAME  
FRANCES.

HM...

THAT'S  
A MOUTHFUL.

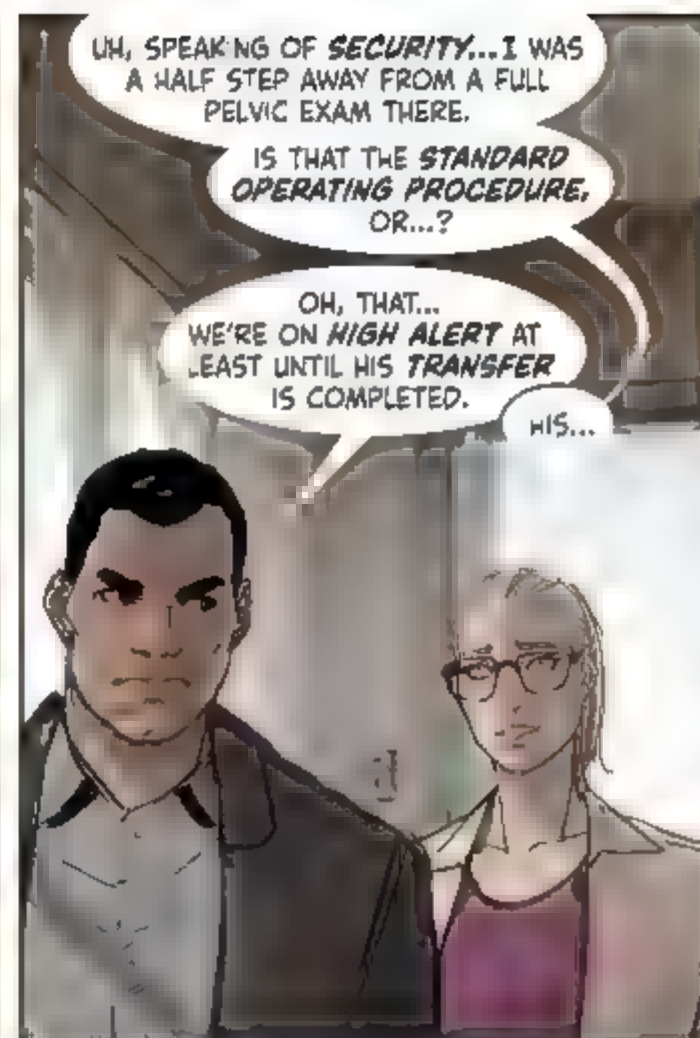
ANYHOW,  
I'M TIM. TIM  
BRONSON.



I'M THE CHIEF OF  
SECURITY HERE.

COME ON,  
LET'S GET YOU  
INTO OUR  
SYSTEM.

RIGHT...

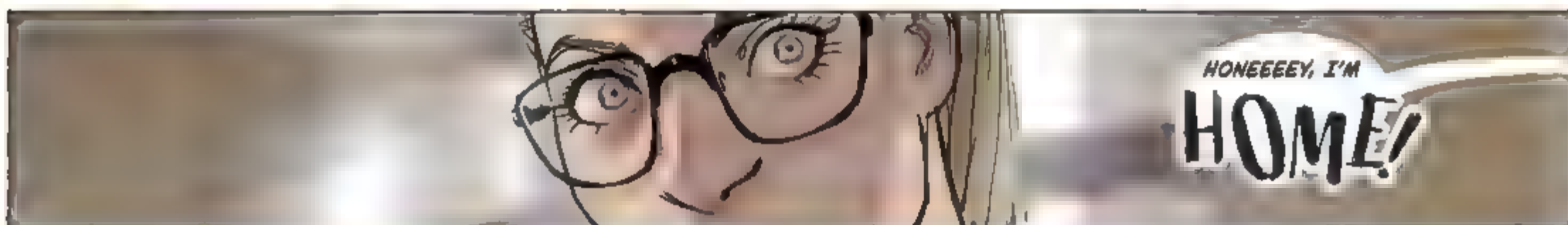


UH, SPEAKING OF *SECURITY*...I WAS  
A HALF STEP AWAY FROM A FULL  
PELVIC EXAM THERE.

IS THAT THE *STANDARD  
OPERATING PROCEDURE*,  
OR...?

OH, THAT...  
WE'RE ON *HIGH ALERT* AT  
LEAST UNTIL HIS *TRANSFER*  
IS COMPLETED.

HIS...



HONEEEY, I'M

**HOME!**



LOOK AT  
ALL THESE *GLUM*  
FACES!

YOU ~~NEEM~~  
TROUBLED! HAVE YOU  
CONSIDERED THERAPY?  
IT'S DONE *WONDERS*  
FOR ME!





NOTHING?  
OKAY, HOW 'BOUT THIS:  
THEY SAY THAT THE DEFINITION  
OF MADNESS IS DOING THE SAME  
THING OVER AND OVER AGAIN  
AND EXPECTING DIFFERENT  
RESULTS.  
SAY...

COME TO THINK  
OF IT, YOU SURE DO  
KEEP BRNGING ME BACK  
HERE OVER AND  
OVER AGAIN!

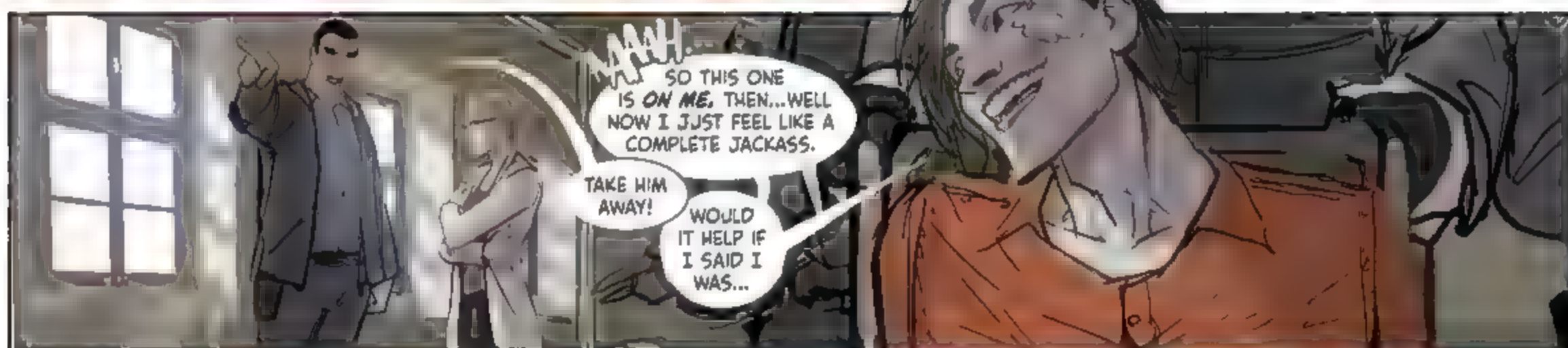
STILL  
NOTHING,  
HUH?



I PREFERRED THE OLD  
SECURITY STAFF...THEY HAD  
A SENSE OF HUMOR

WHAT  
HAPPENED TO  
THEM?

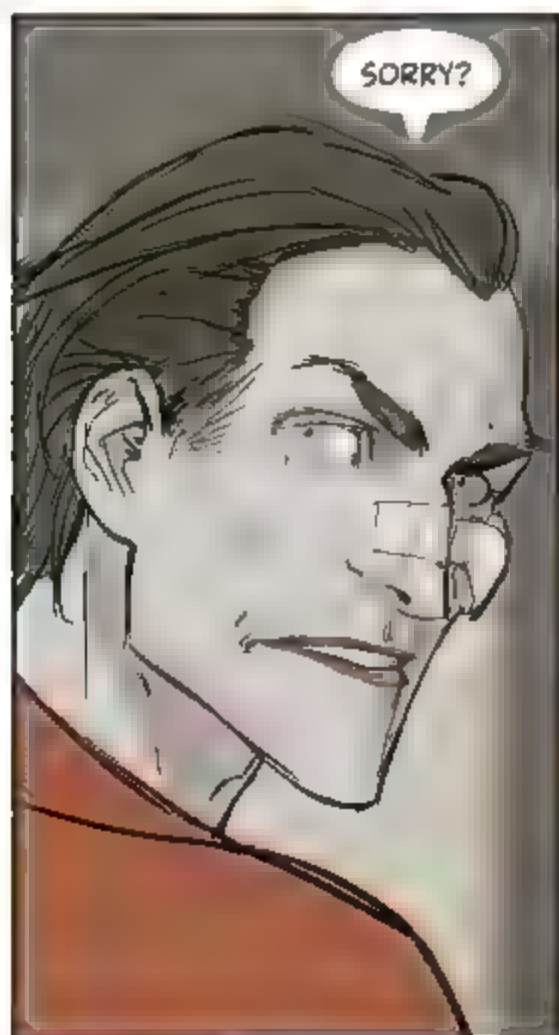
YOUR ESCAPE  
HAPPENED.



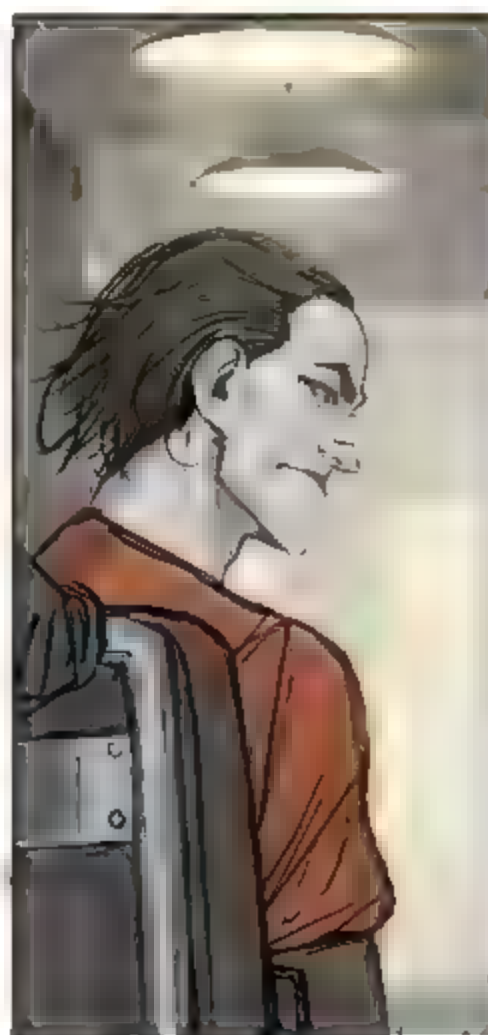
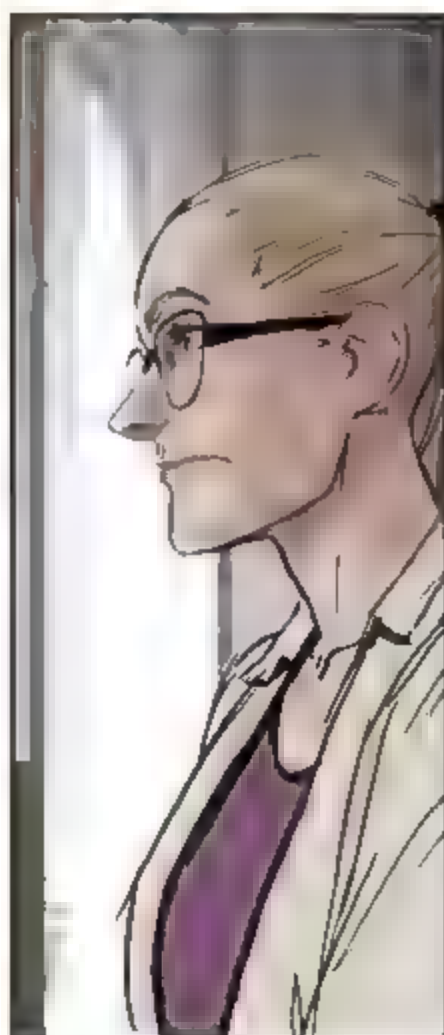
SO THIS ONE  
IS ON ME, THEN...WELL  
NOW I JUST FEEL LIKE A  
COMPLETE JACKASS.

TAKE HIM  
AWAY!

WOULD  
IT HELP IF  
I SAID I  
WAS...



SORRY?



SORRY 'BOUT  
THAT, DOC.

NO, NO,  
IT'S FINE.

HE'S A BIT  
**INTENSE** THE FIRST  
TIME YOU MEET H.M.,  
BUT YOU'LL SHAKE IT  
OFF FAST.

Y-YEAH...





BACK THEN IT ALL FELT LIKE NOTHING MORE THAN A **TERRIFYING COINCIDENCE**.

BUT KNOWING NOW WHAT I NEVER KNEW THEN...I CAN'T HELP BUT ONCE AGAIN THINK OF SHONDRA'S STARS.



I MEAN, WE BOTH ARRIVED AT ARKHAM ON THE **SAME DAY**.



WE WENT THROUGH THE **SAME THINGS** FOR DIFFERENT REASONS...

OKAY NOW...LOOK THIS WAY.

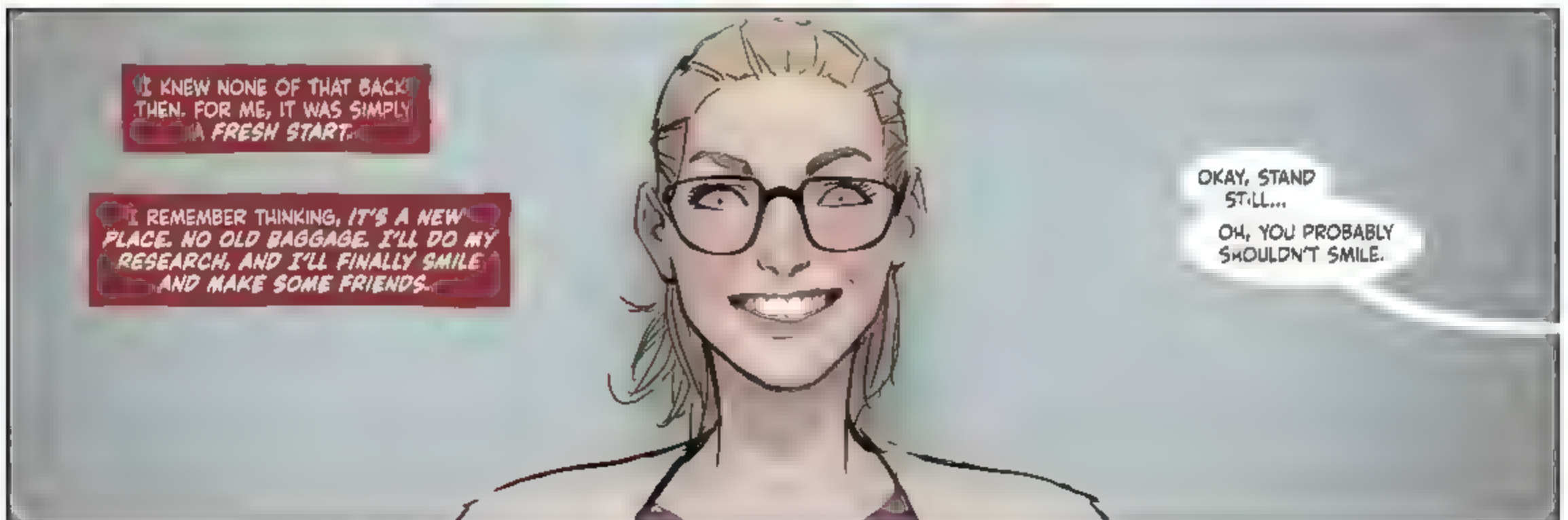


THINKING ABOUT IT, IT ALL FEELS SORT OF **COSMIC**...THE TWO OF US, LIKE TWO INTERSTELLAR OBJECTS GRAVITATING TOWARD EACH OTHER ON A COLLISION COURSE...

OH, THERE WOULD BE **CHAOS** AND **DESTRUCTION**...

BUT MY WHAT A **SIGHT** IT WOULD MAKE...

AND SMILE, JACKASS!



I KNEW NONE OF THAT BACK THEN. FOR ME, IT WAS SIMPLY A **FRESH START**.

I REMEMBER THINKING, IT'S A NEW PLACE. NO OLD BAGGAGE. I'LL DO MY RESEARCH, AND I'LL FINALLY SMILE AND MAKE SOME FRIENDS.

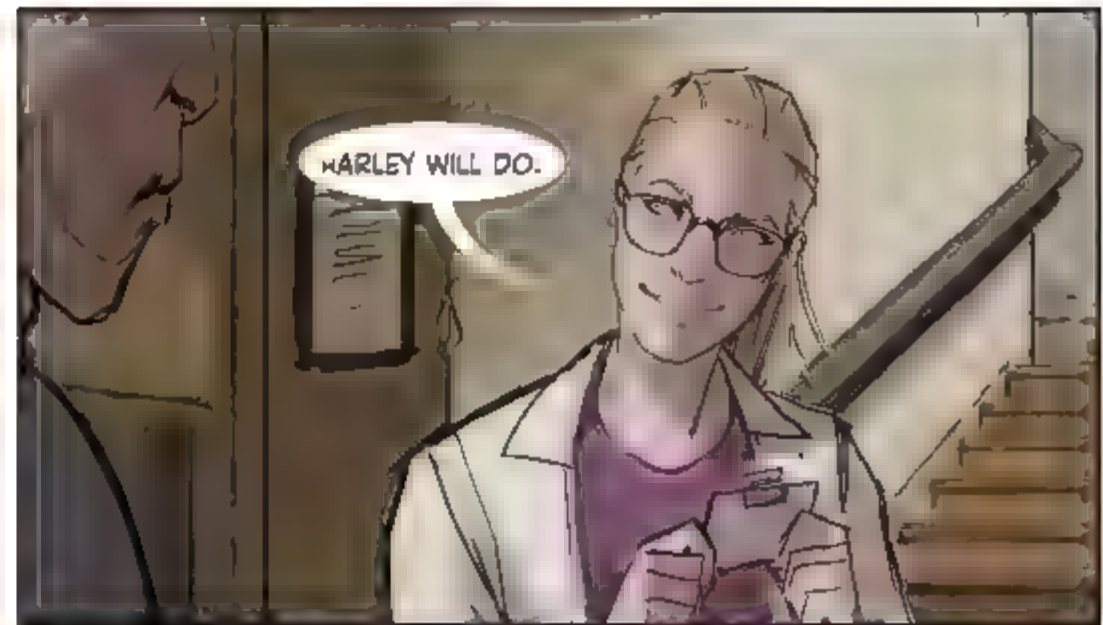
OKAY, STAND STILL...  
OH, YOU PROBABLY SHOULDN'T SMILE.



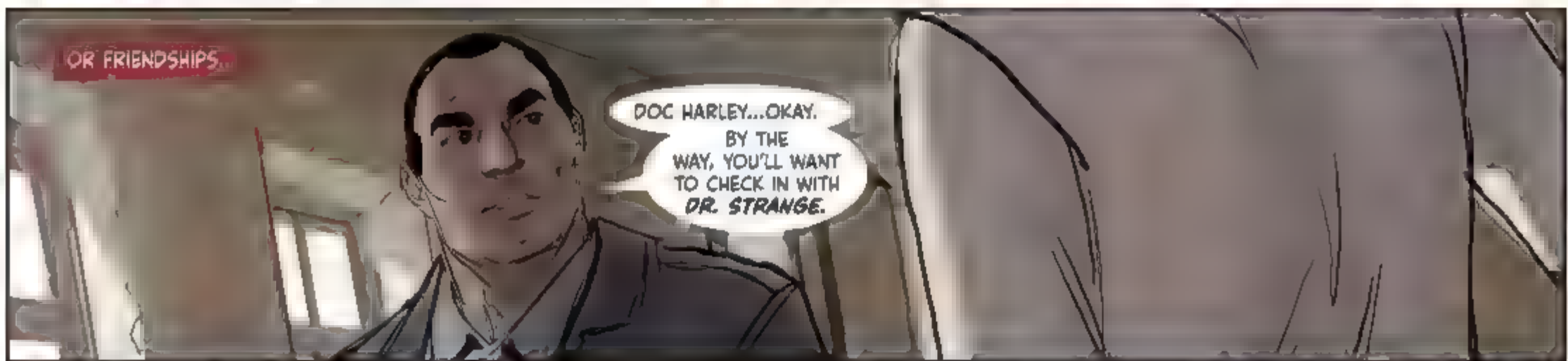
IT TURNS OUT, ARKHAM WAS NO PLACE FOR SMILES.



HERE YOU GO, DOCTOR UH...DOC!

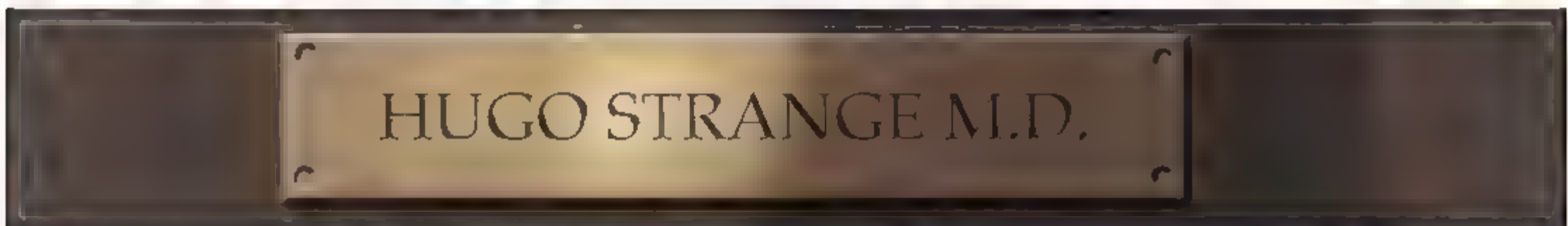


HARLEY WILL DO.



OR FRIENDSHIPS...

DOC HARLEY...OKAY. BY THE WAY, YOU'LL WANT TO CHECK IN WITH DR. STRANGE.



HUGO STRANGE M.D.



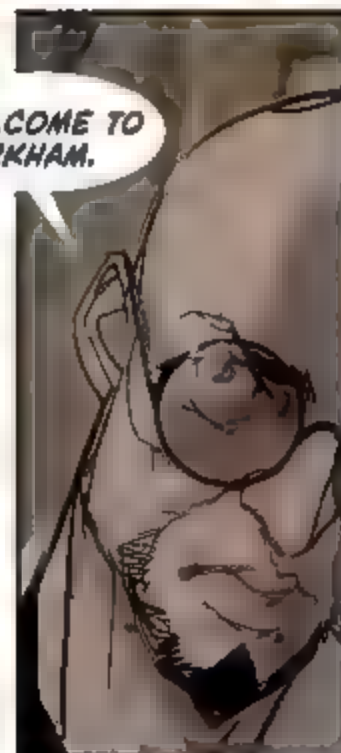
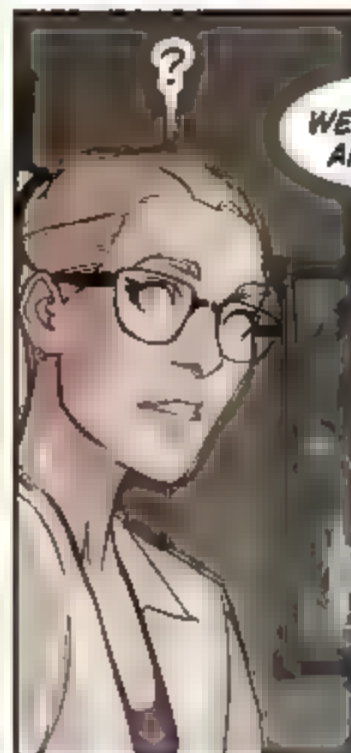
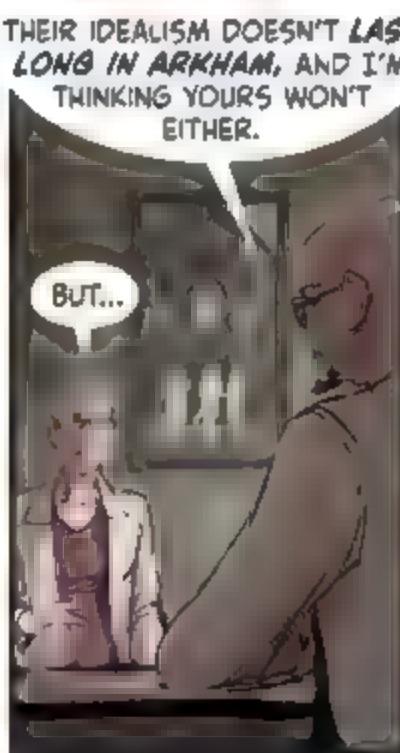
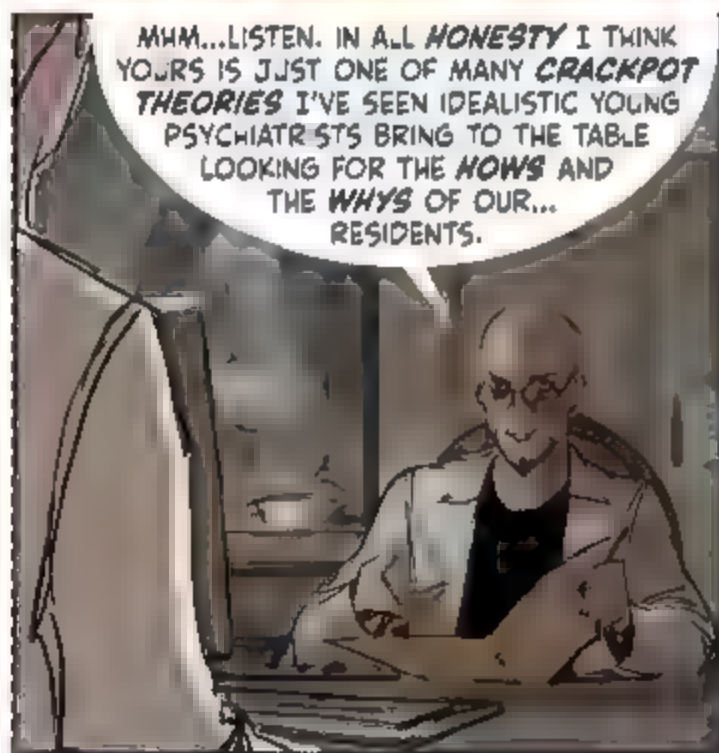
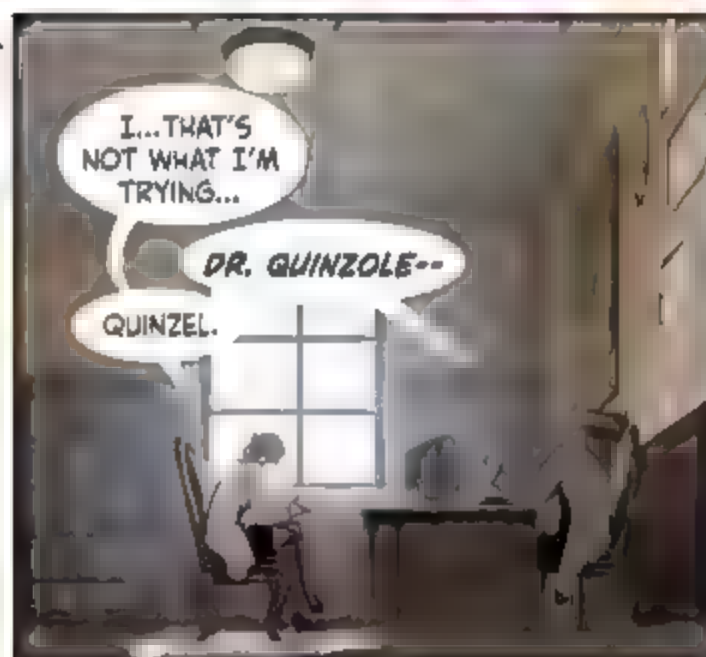
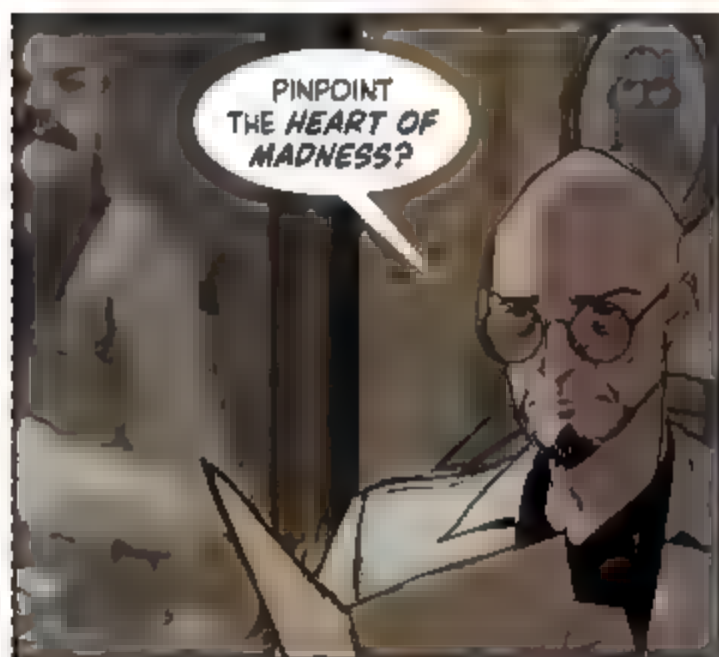
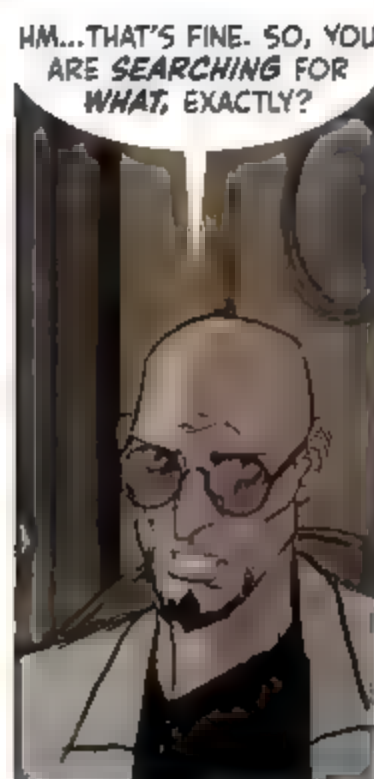
NOW THEN, DR. QUINZOLE...

OH FOR CRYING OUT LOUD...



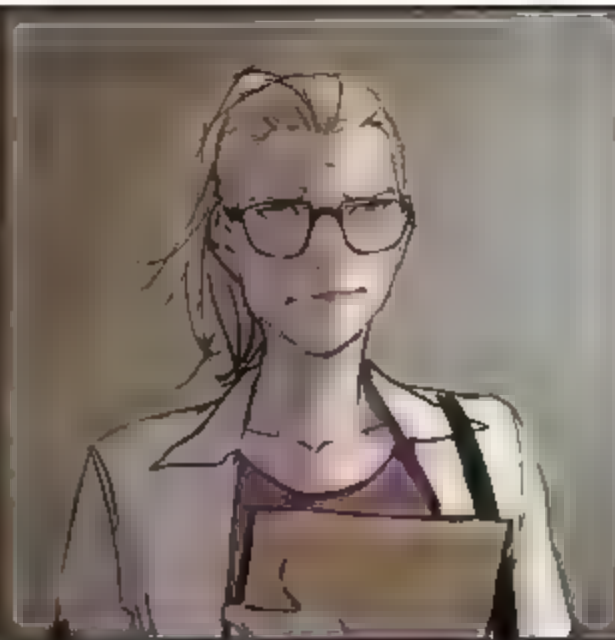
ARKHAM IS A PLACE OF HEALING. AND I VERY MUCH INTEND TO KEEP IT SO.







HE SAID WELCOME,  
BUT LET'S BE HONEST  
THIS WAS ARKHAM.



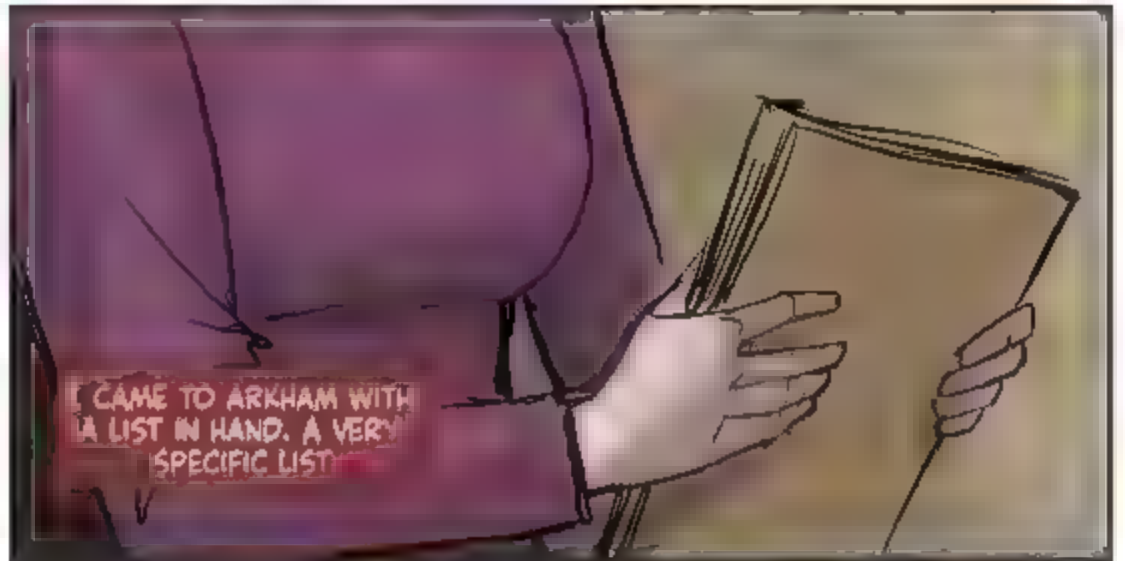
A SMALL, WINDOWLESS OFFICE  
WITH A MISPELLED NAME WAS  
AS GOOD AS IT GOT.

**Dr. Quinzoll**

AND I WAS OKAY WITH THAT. BEATS  
A CUBICLE, AND ANYWAY, I HADN'T  
GONE THERE FOR COMFORT. I HAD  
A JOB TO DO.



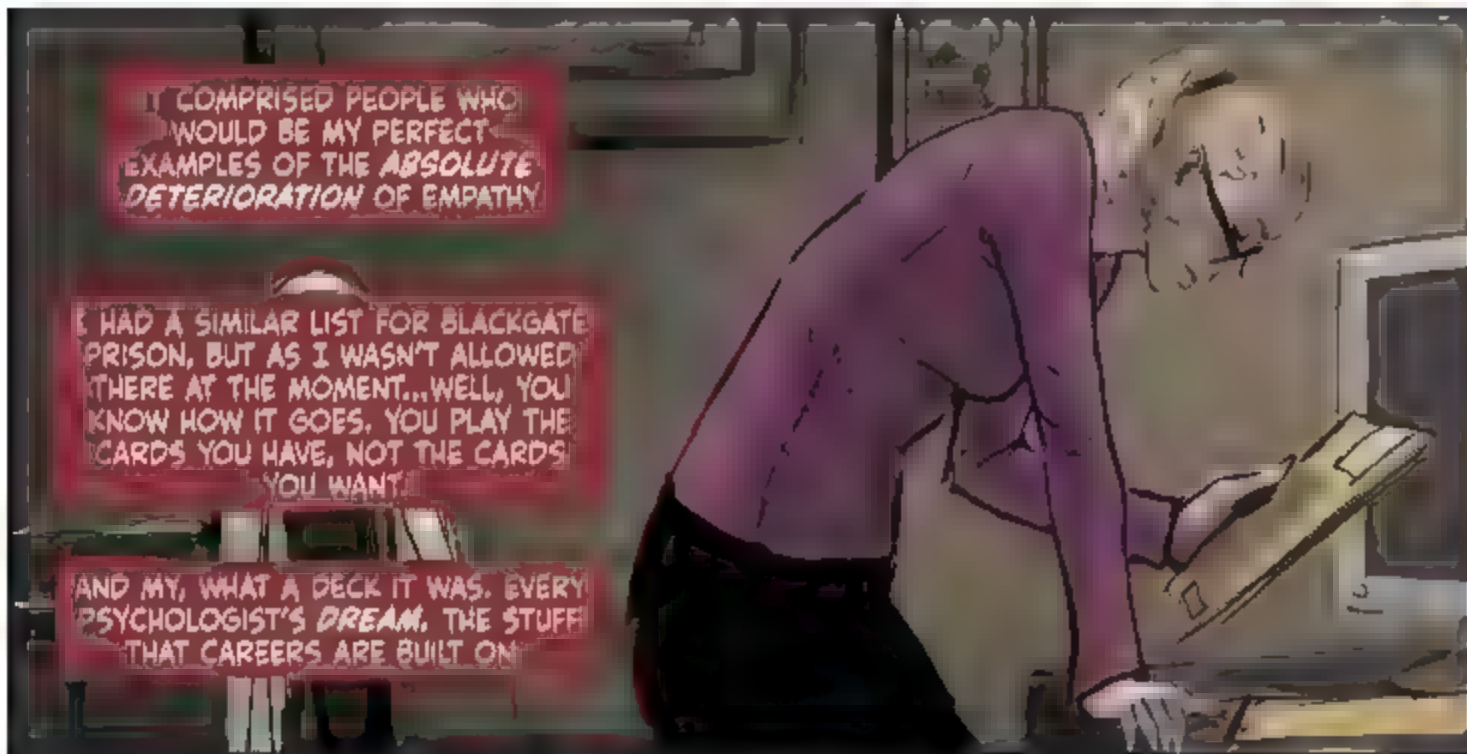
I CAME TO ARKHAM WITH  
A LIST IN HAND. A VERY  
SPECIFIC LIST.



IT COMPRISED PEOPLE WHO  
WOULD BE MY PERFECT  
EXAMPLES OF THE **ABSOLUTE**  
DETERIORATION OF EMPATHY.

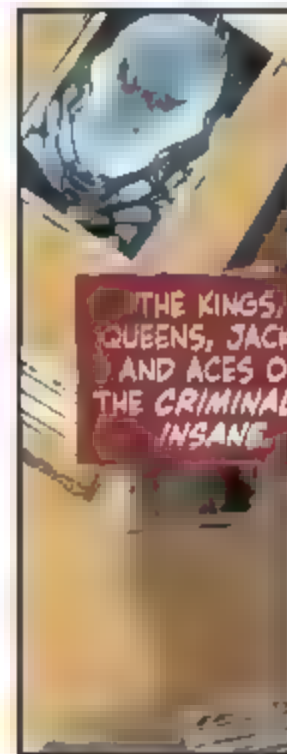
I HAD A SIMILAR LIST FOR BLACKGATE  
PRISON, BUT AS I WASN'T ALLOWED  
THERE AT THE MOMENT...WELL, YOU  
KNOW HOW IT GOES. YOU PLAY THE  
CARDS YOU HAVE, NOT THE CARDS  
YOU WANT.

AND MY, WHAT A DECK IT WAS. EVERY  
PSYCHOLOGIST'S **DREAM**. THE STUFF  
THAT CAREERS ARE BUILT ON.

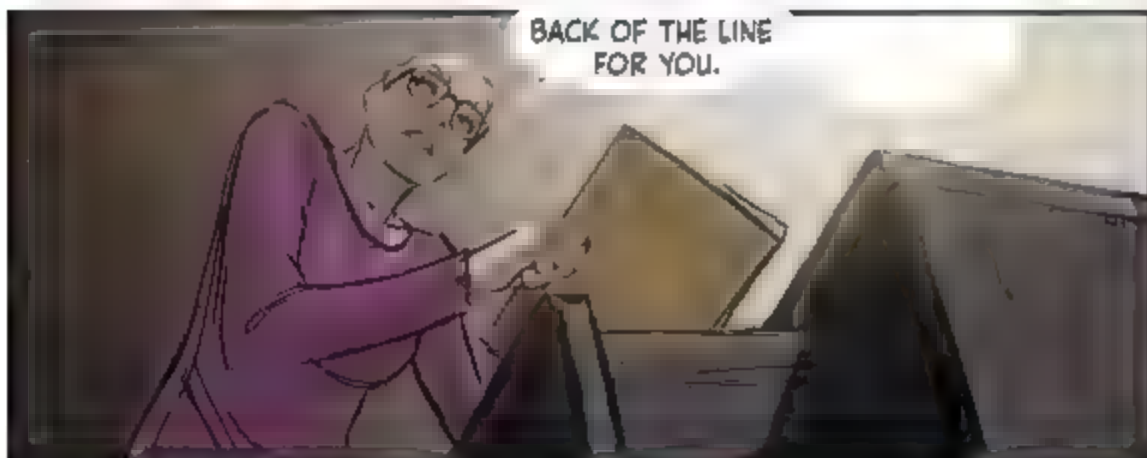


THE KINGS,  
QUEENS, JACKS  
AND ACES OF  
THE **CRIMINALLY**  
**INSANE**.

AND YES...  
A JOKER  
AS WELL.



BACK OF THE LINE  
FOR YOU.

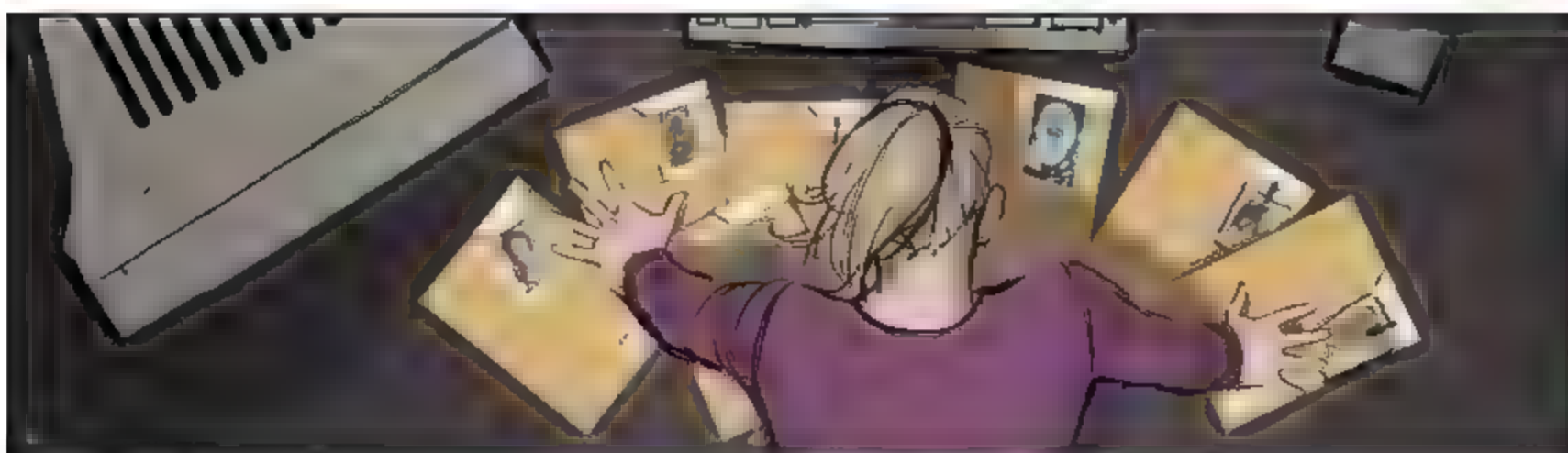


I WASN'T NEARLY  
READY TO DEAL  
WITH HIM... BUT  
THAT WAS FINE.



I HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH  
ANTISOCIAL PERSONALITY  
DISORDERS TO GO THROUGH.

THE WAY I SAW IT, BY THE TIME  
I WAS DONE WITH THEM, MY  
NIGHTMARES WOULD HAVE GONE  
AWAY, AND HE WOULD SHRINK  
IN THE EYES OF THIS...WELL...  
YOU GET IT.





AND YOU KNOW WHAT?  
FIRST, IT SEEMED THE  
MIGHT BE THE CASE.

I MEAN, HE WAS AN INTENSE  
PERSONALITY BUT LET'S BE  
HONEST, THEY ALL WERE.

OH  
EVERY SCAR IS  
A STORY...

A LOT OF  
STORIES. A LOT  
OF REAL HAPPY  
ENDINGS.

YES,  
I'M AWARE OF  
THEIR STORIES  
MR. ZSASSZ.  
I'M CURRENTLY  
INTERESTED IN YOUR  
STORY.

BUT THEY  
ARE ALL MY  
STORY.

RIGHT

EMPATHY?

YOU  
WANT TO ASK  
ME ABOUT MY  
EMPATHY?

I CAN LITERALLY  
FEEL THE DYING OF  
NATURE IN MY VERY  
FLESH.

I CAN HEAR THE  
SCREAMS OF THE GREEN AND  
THE TRIUMPHANT HOWLS OF THE  
FESTERING DECAY.

AND YOU  
HAVE THE NERVE TO  
ASK ME ABOUT EMPATHY,  
AS YOU SCRIBBLE NOTES  
ON THE DESECRATED  
CORPSES OF FELLED  
TREES?

THE ONLY  
REASON I AM EVEN HERE  
IS BECAUSE I LET THEM  
CATCH ME.

MY RIDDLES  
ARE THEIR FIGHTING  
CHANCE.

BUT  
DON'T WORRY.  
DOCTOR, I'M HERE

IN FACT,  
I'LL GIVE YOU A  
CLUE OF WHAT  
I'LL DO!

THERE'S A THING  
ON SUPERMAN'S BACK. A  
WONDERFUL THING, WITH  
A LETTER ON TOP.

NAME ME  
THAT LETTER AND  
NAME ME THAT

S... CAPE?

NO ROOM  
FOR EMPATHY.

MAN-EAT-MAN  
WORLD

ME TOP OF THE  
FOOD CHAIN.

AND SEE  
ME DO FREE WITH  
NO CHAIN, CUFF, OR  
STRONG!

WELL,  
DOCTOR?  
WHAT WILL  
I DO?

AJICE AT  
LONG LAST YOU'VE  
ARRIVED

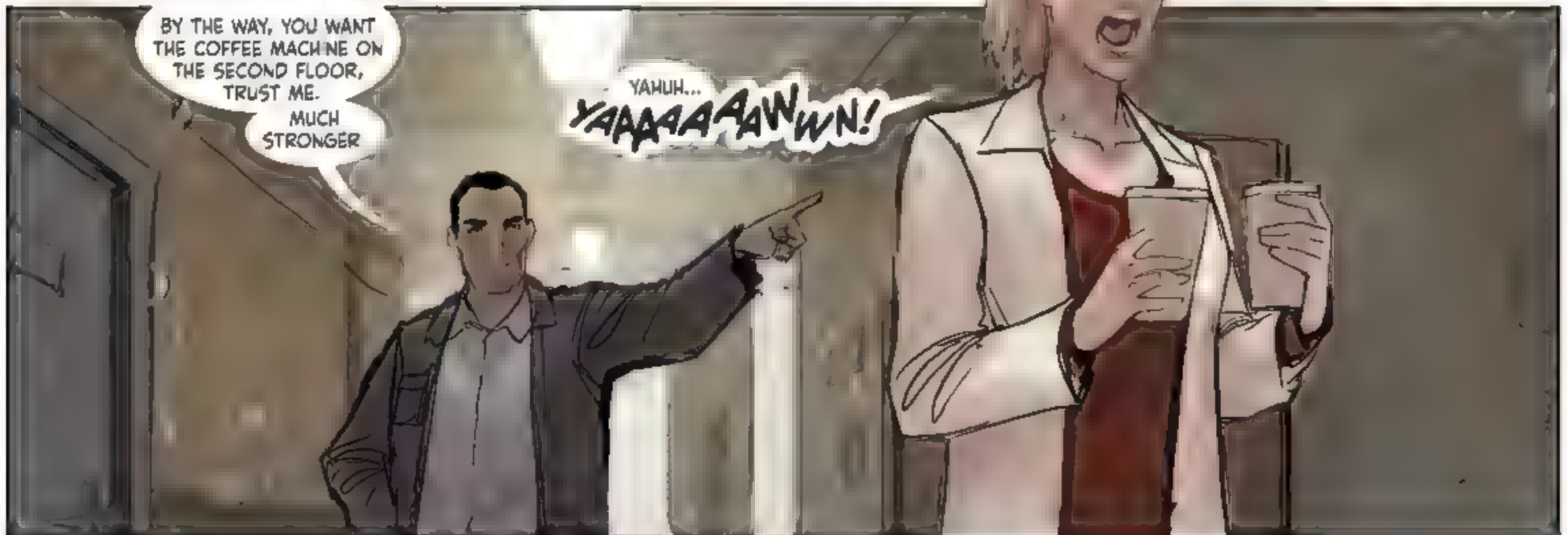
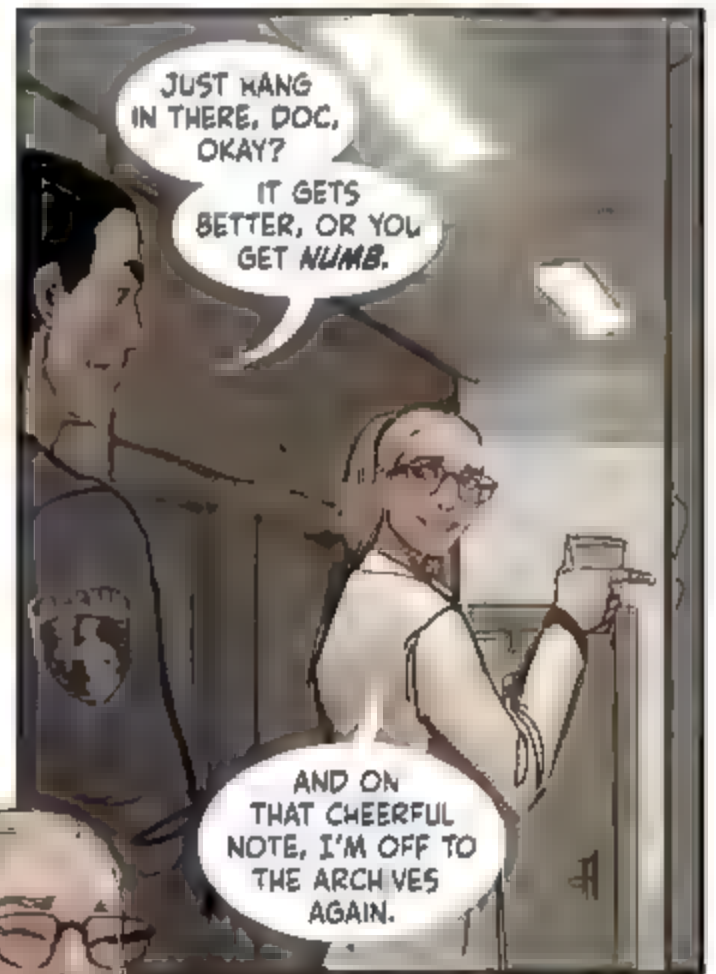
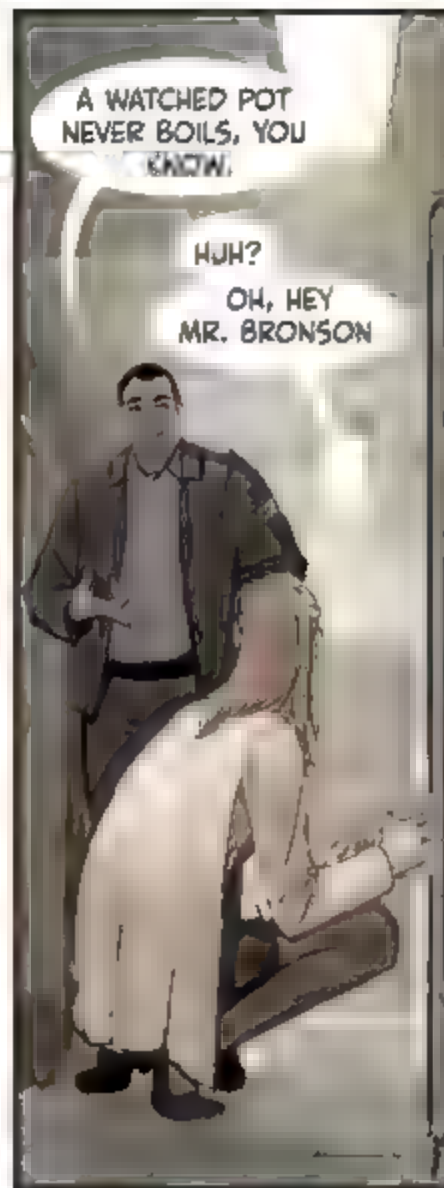
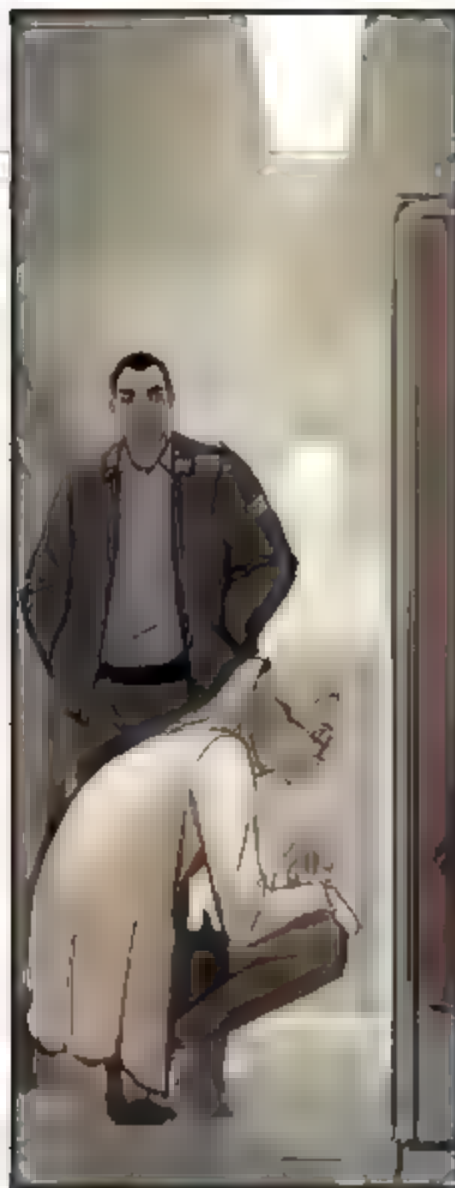
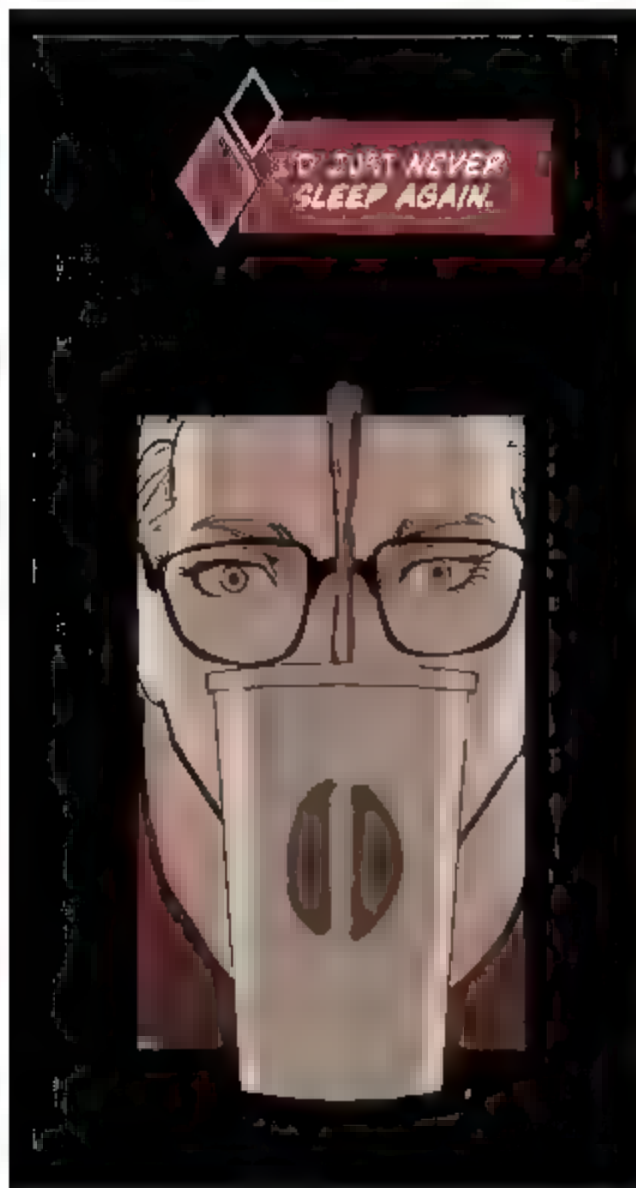
WE ABSOLUTELY  
MUST HAVE OUR TEA  
NOW!

FOR A WHILE MY SLEEP IMPROVED, BUT  
AS MY INTERVIEW LIST GREW SHORTER  
MY THOUGHTS TURNED TO THE FILE  
I'VE DRAWN TO HIM.

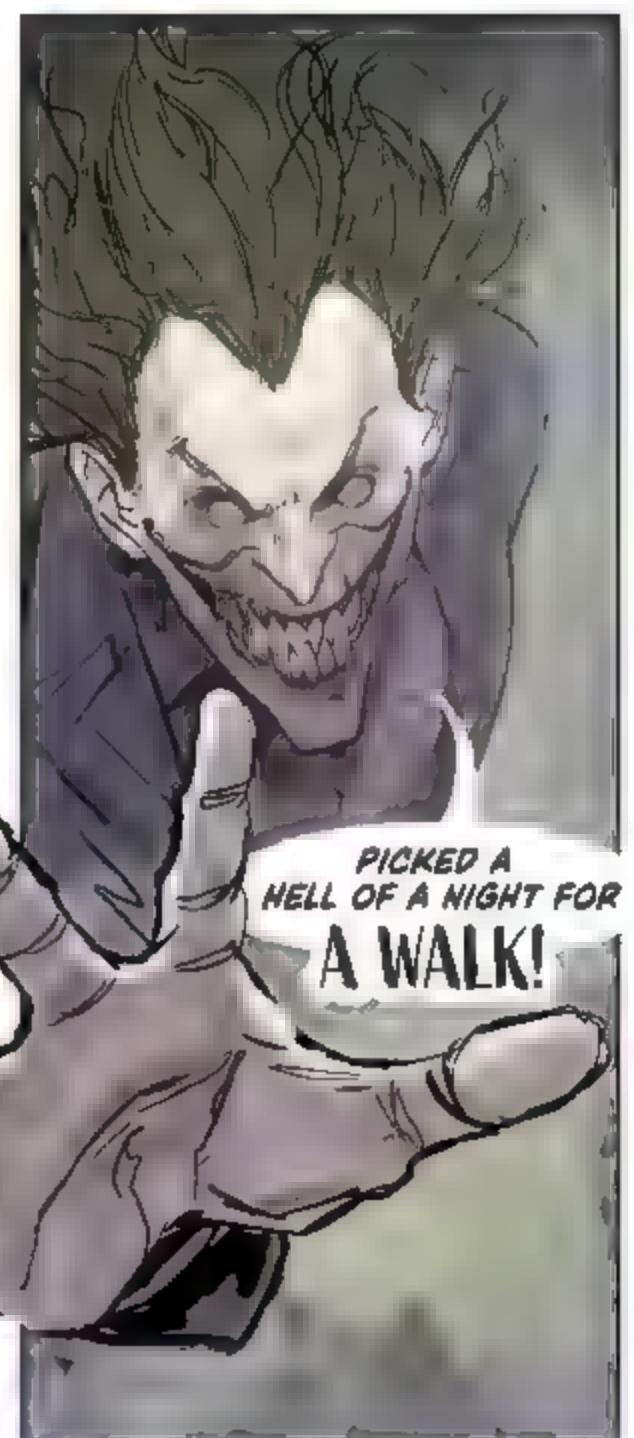
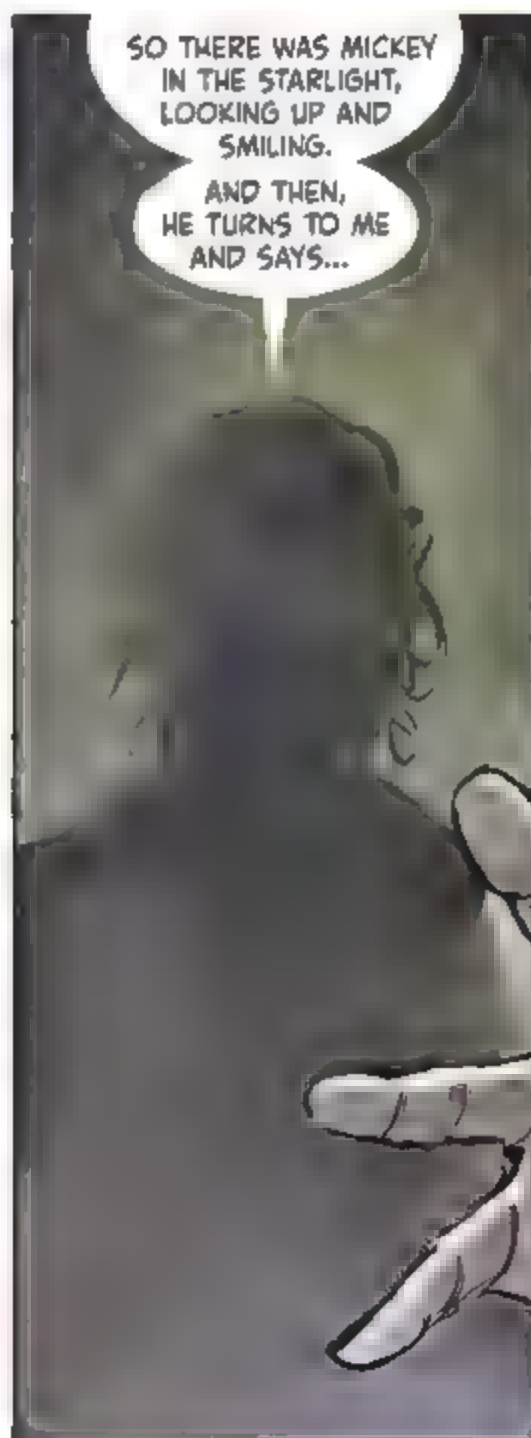
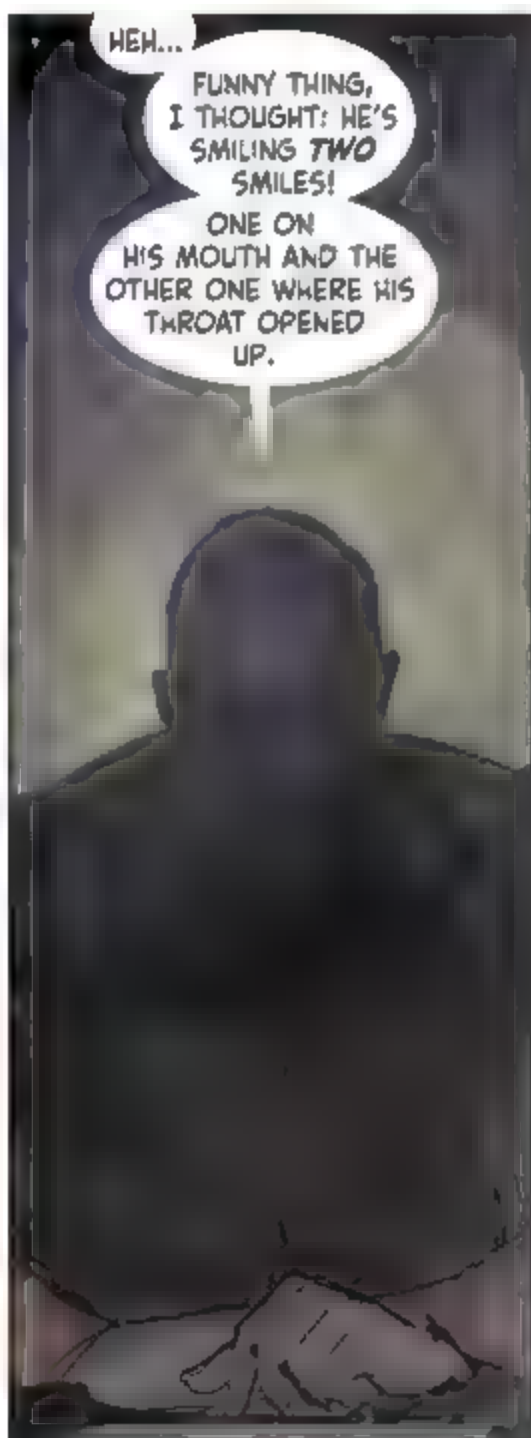
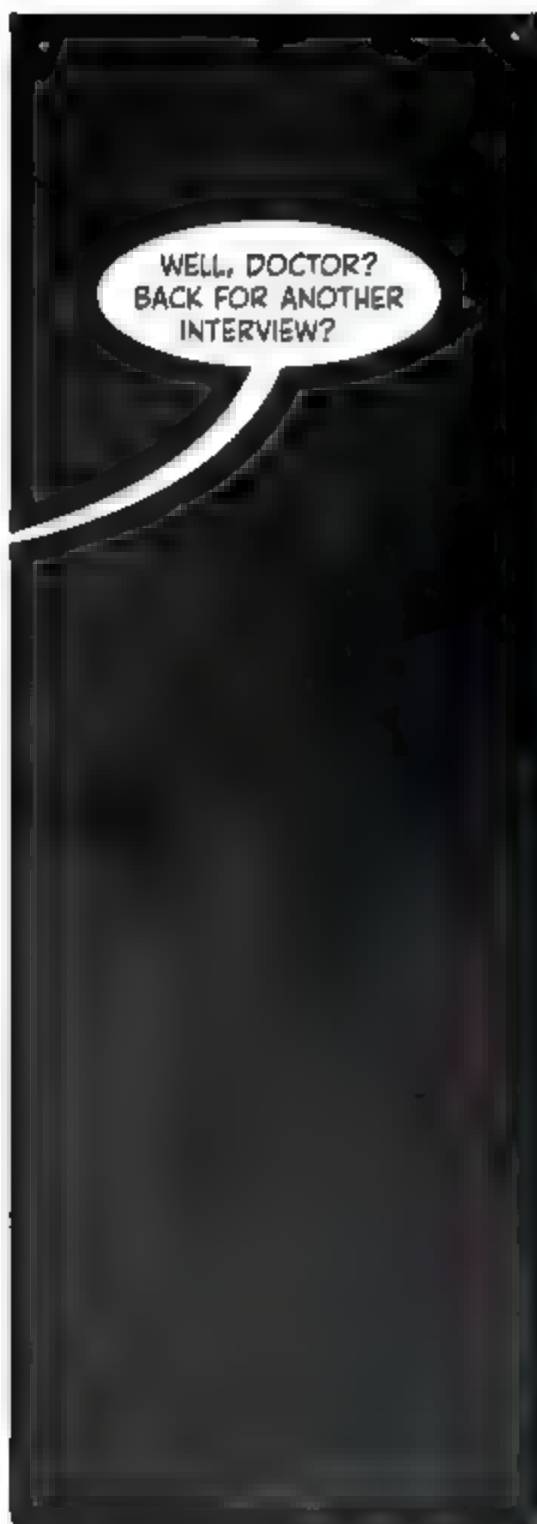
HE STARTED WHISPERING STORIES ON MY BED, AND THAT  
WAS THE NIGHT THEY FOUND THEIR WAY BACK INTO MY  
DREAMS. NOW I'M TERRIFIED TO SLEEP.

THE END











BWAH?

FOR MORE THAN  
THREE WEEKS I'D BEEN  
AVOIDING HIM.

FOR ALMOST A MONTH  
HE HAD *INVADED* MY  
DREAMS.

AND THAT DAY I KNEW THERE  
WAS NO ESCAPE FROM IT.

FUCK!

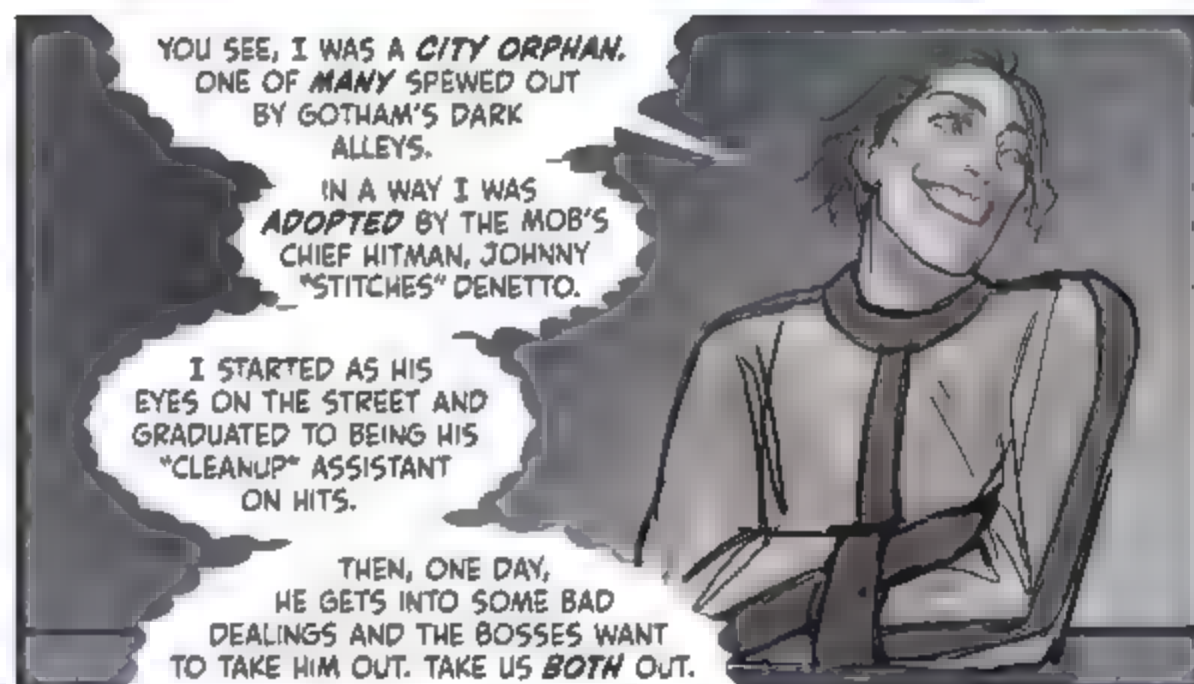
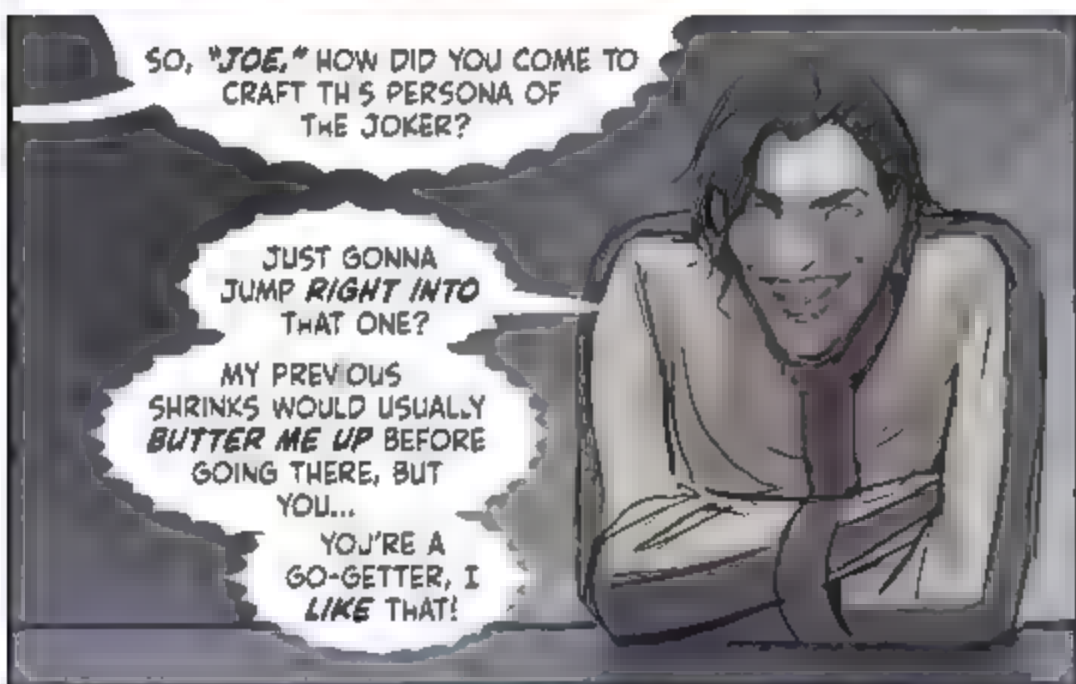
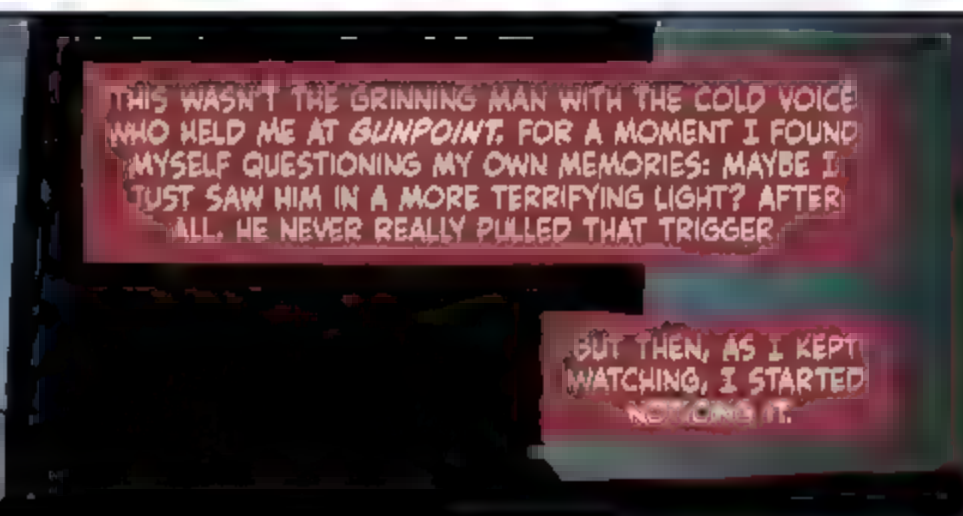
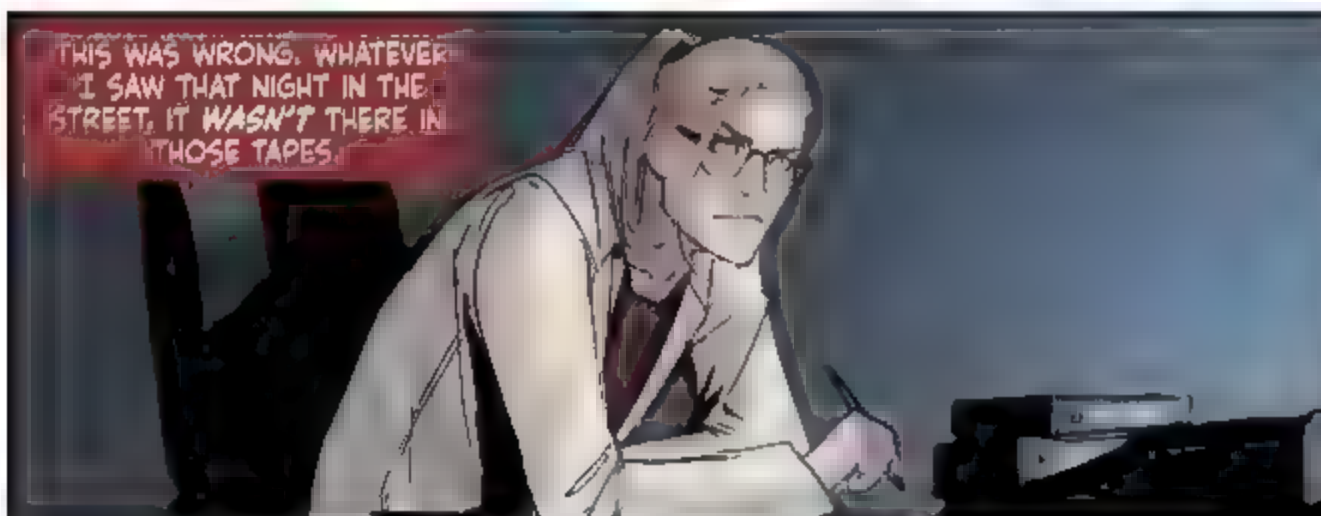
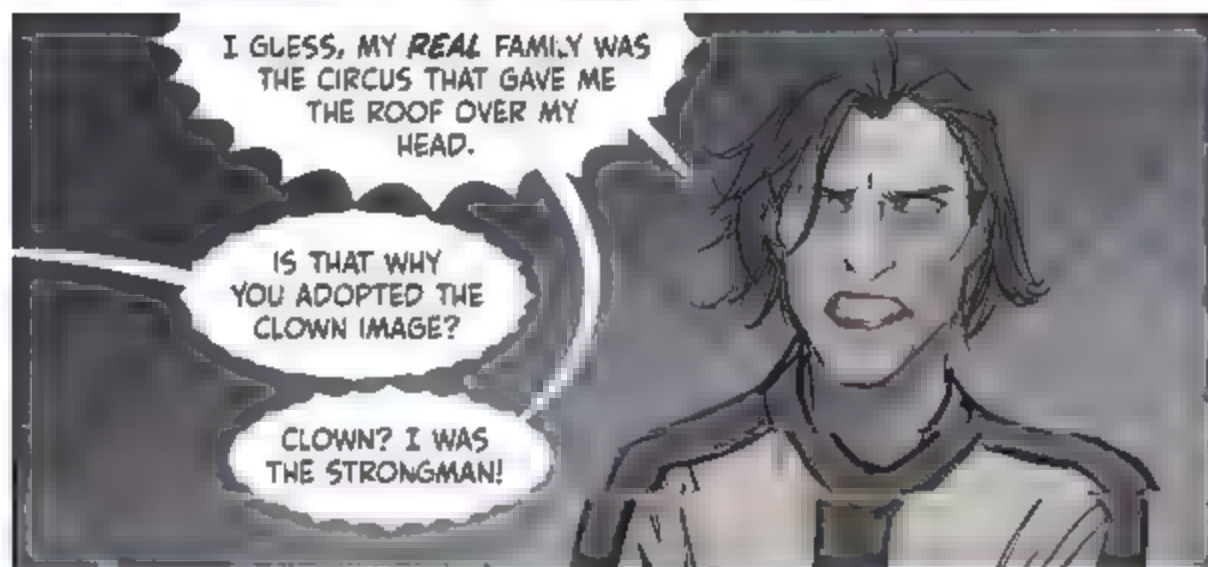
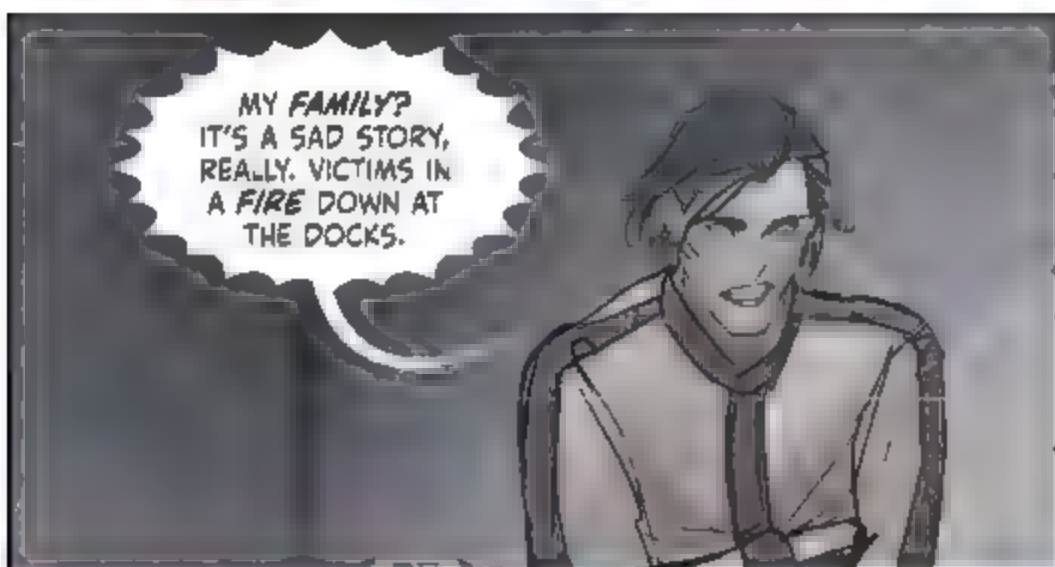
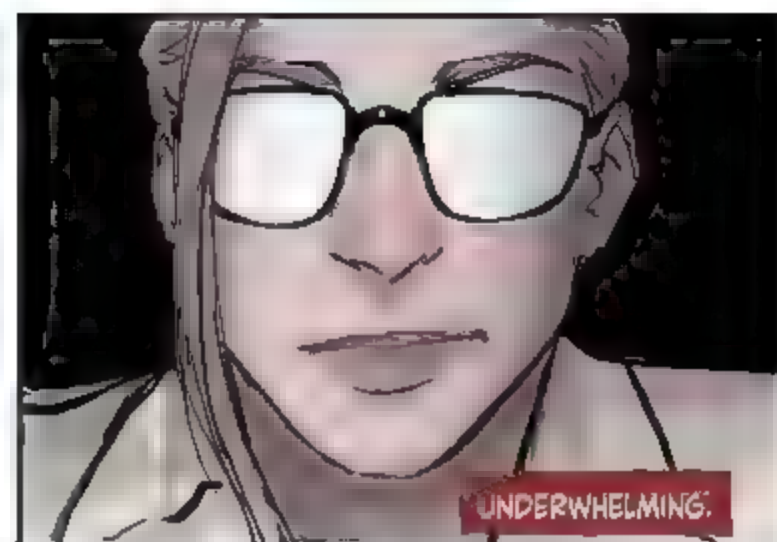
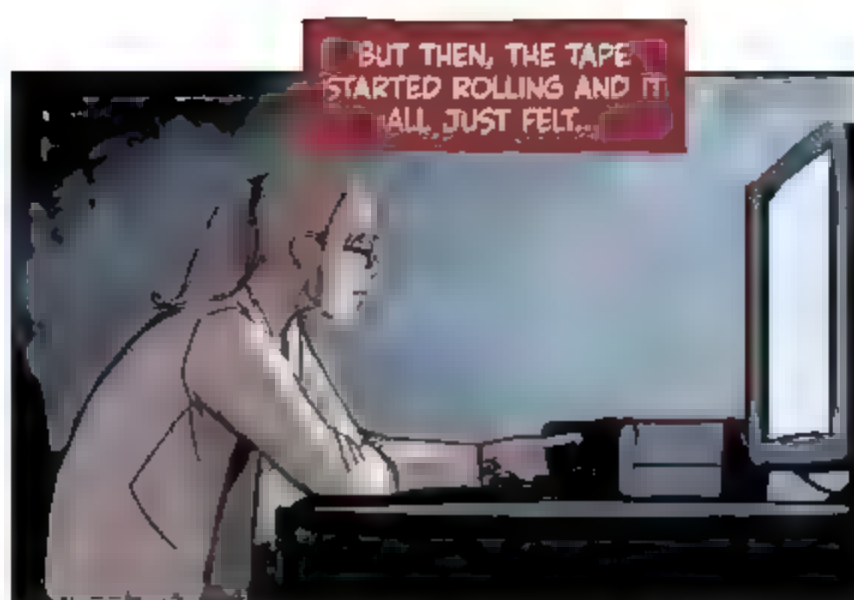
FINE,  
DAMN IT!

OKAY, HARLEY! YOU'RE A GROWN  
WOMAN WHO SAT FACE TO FACE  
WITH *KILLER CROC*.

THIS  
CLOWN IS  
NOTHING!

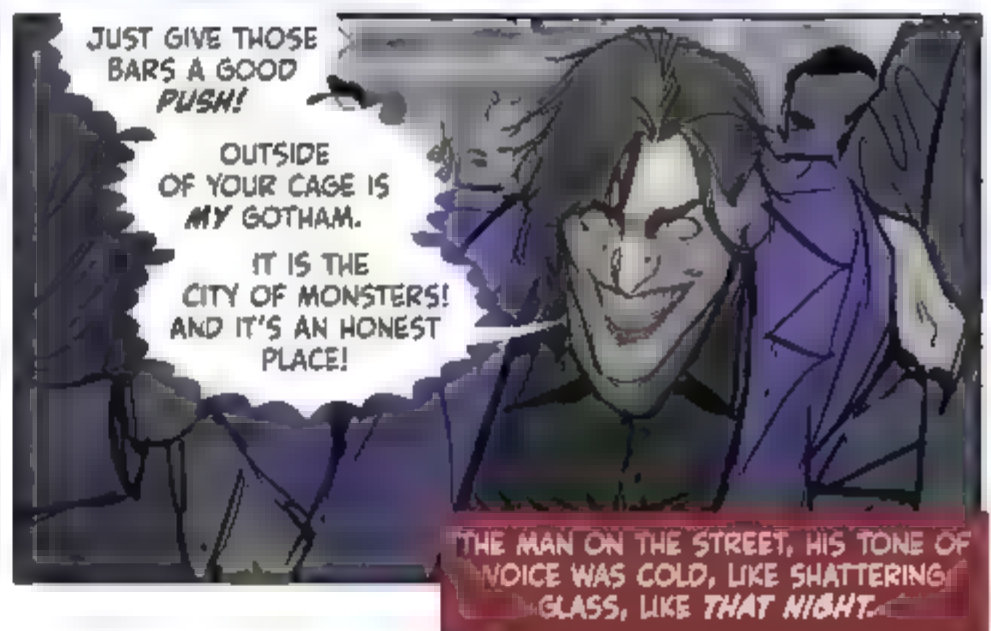
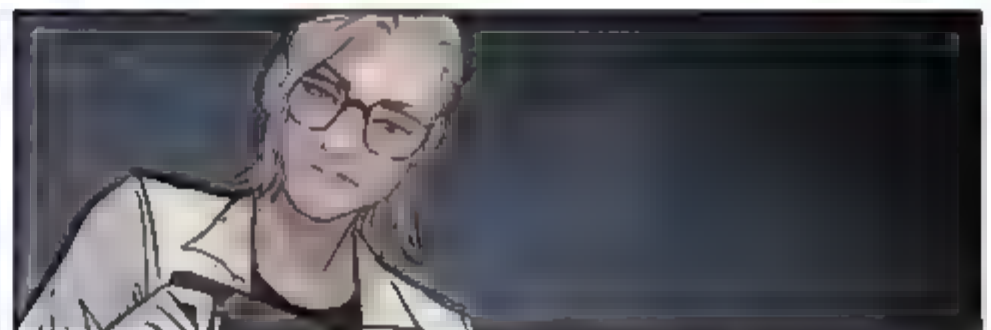
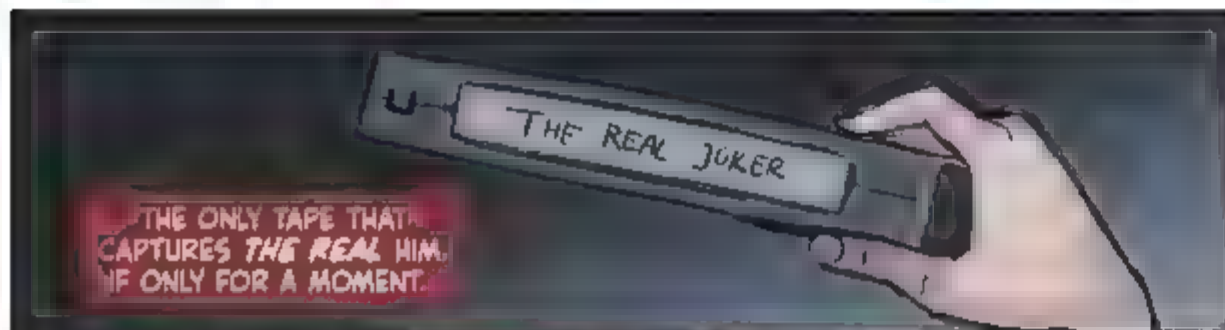
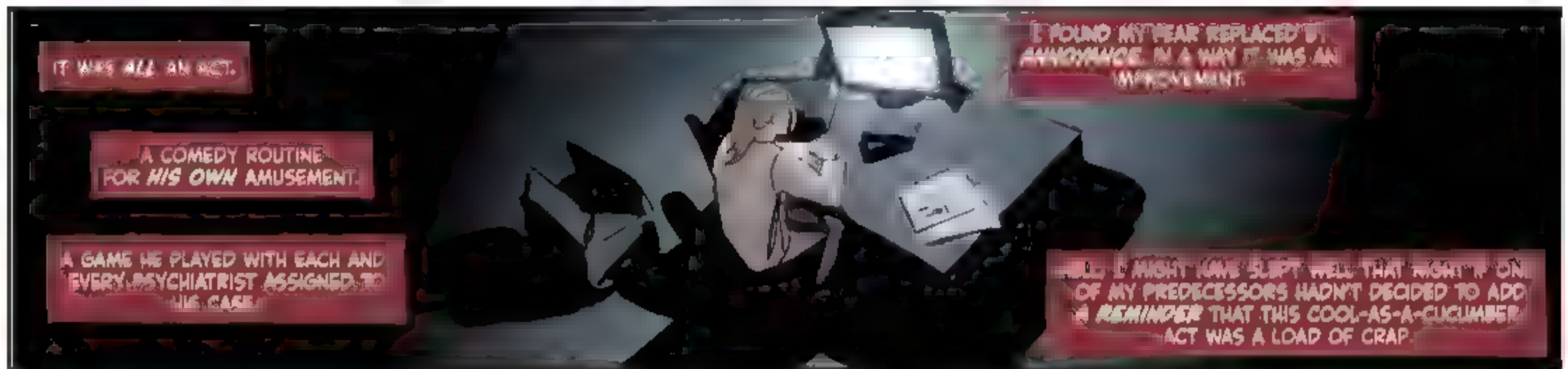
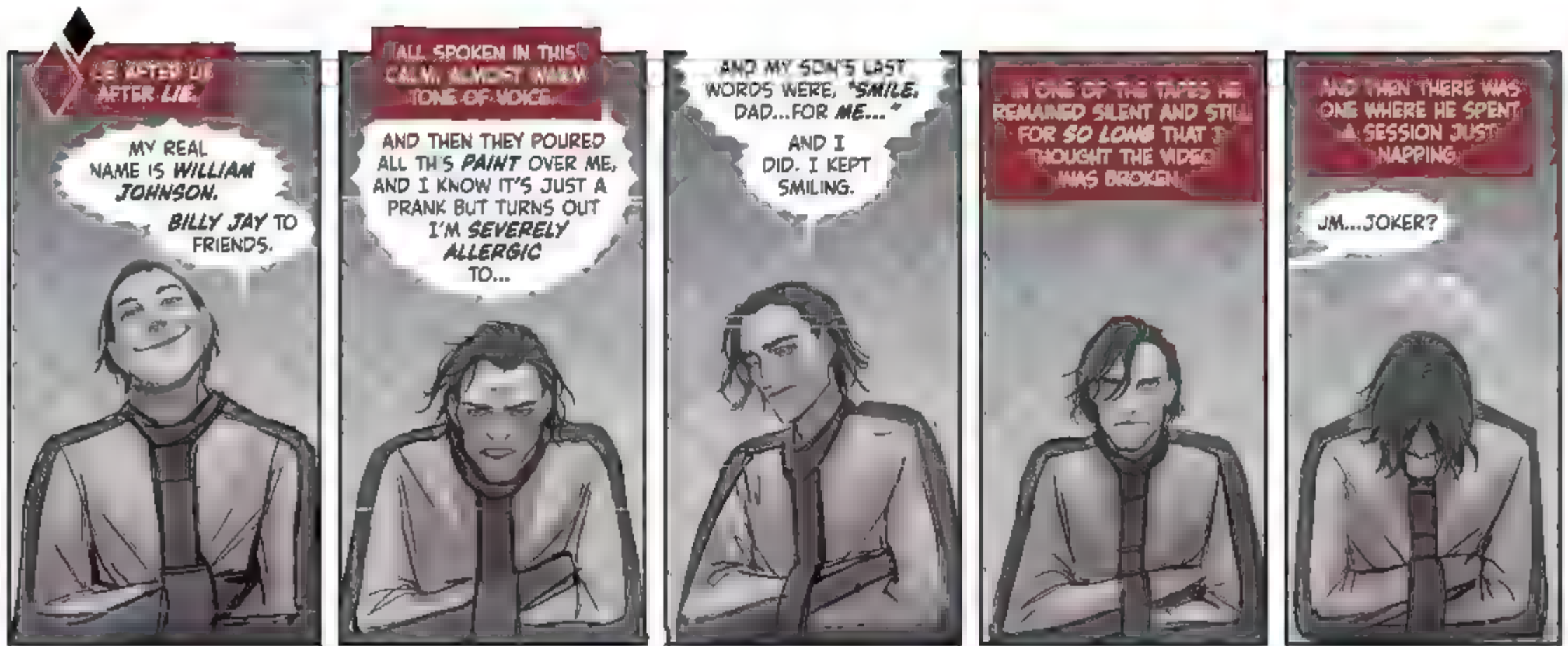
I SAID THAT, BUT I  
REMEMBER MY HANDS  
SHAKING AS I CARRIED  
BOXES WITH TAPES OF  
HIS INTERVIEWS.



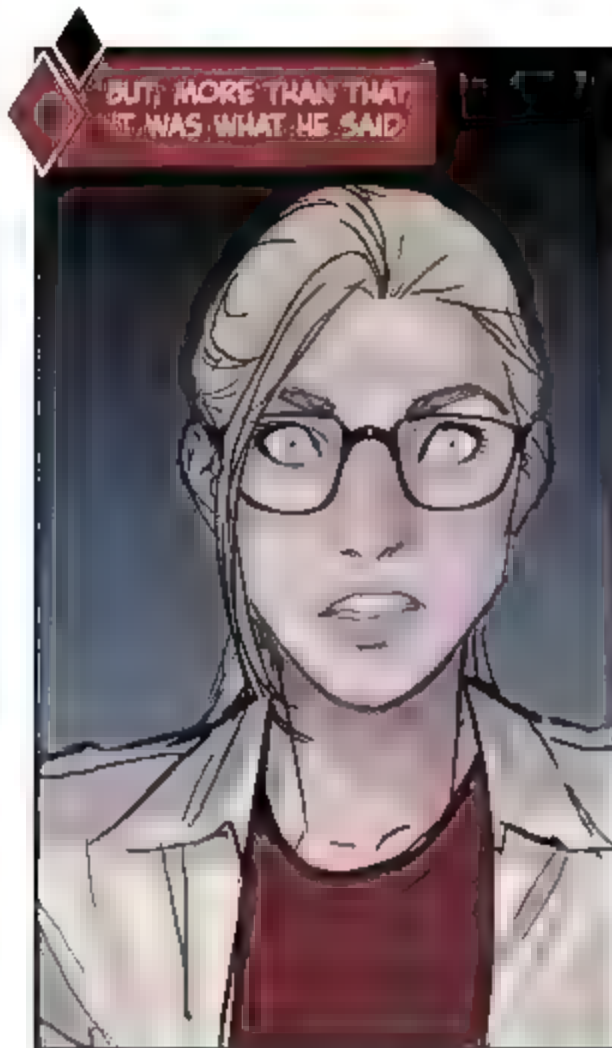


ONE VIDEO AFTER ANOTHER...





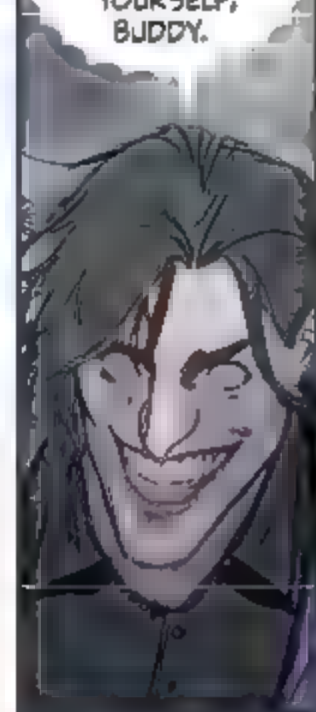




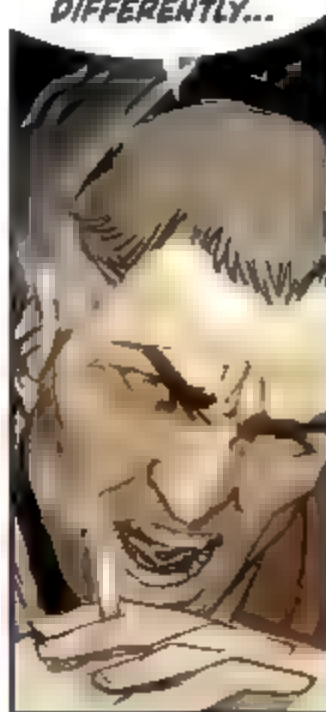
BUT, MORE THAN THAT,  
IT WAS WHAT HE SAID.

WE'RE ALL MONSTERS  
IN A CIVILIZED *CAGE*.  
IT JUST TAKES THE  
*RIGHT* KIND OF PAIN  
AND FEAR TO *BREAK*  
THE LOCK.

SEEMS YOU'RE  
ALMOST THERE  
YOURSELF,  
BUDDY.



SO I BROKE *MY OATH*  
THAT DAY...BLEW HER  
BRAINS OUT...EMPTIED  
THE WHOLE DAMNED  
CLIP...SHIT LIKE THAT.  
IT SNAPS SOMETHING  
INSIDE OF YOU...YOU  
START SEEING THE  
WORLD  
*DIFFERENTLY...*



I HAD TO  
INTERVIEW HIM.

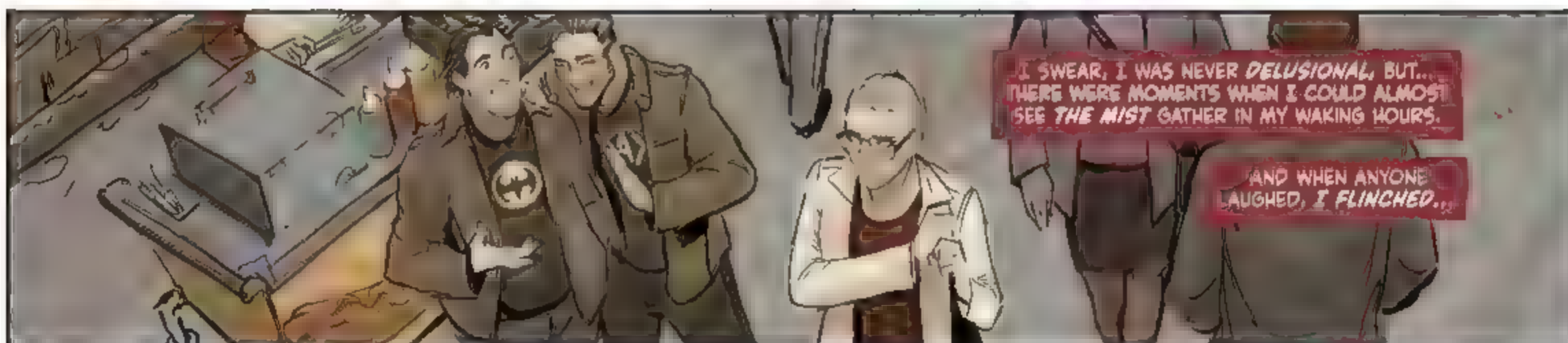
MORE THAN EVER,  
I KNEW THIS.



AND MORE THAN  
EVER, I FEARED IT.



AND WITH THAT FEAR, AND ALL THE WEIGHT  
OF MY THOUGHTS, MY DREAMS WORSENE  
TO A LEVEL I THOUGHT *UNIMAGINABLE*.



I SWEAR, I WAS NEVER *DELUSIONAL*, BUT...  
THERE WERE MOMENTS WHEN I COULD ALMOST  
SEE THE *MIST* GATHER IN MY WAKING HOURS.

AND WHEN ANYONE  
LAUGHED, I *FLINCHED*...



SO, I TURNED TO THE ONE PERSON  
I COULD TRUST, THE ONE PERSON  
THAT COULD HELP ME.

MOSTLY BECAUSE SHE HAD  
ACCESS TO THE *STRONGEST*  
KINDS OF PHARMACEUTICALS.

JOKER

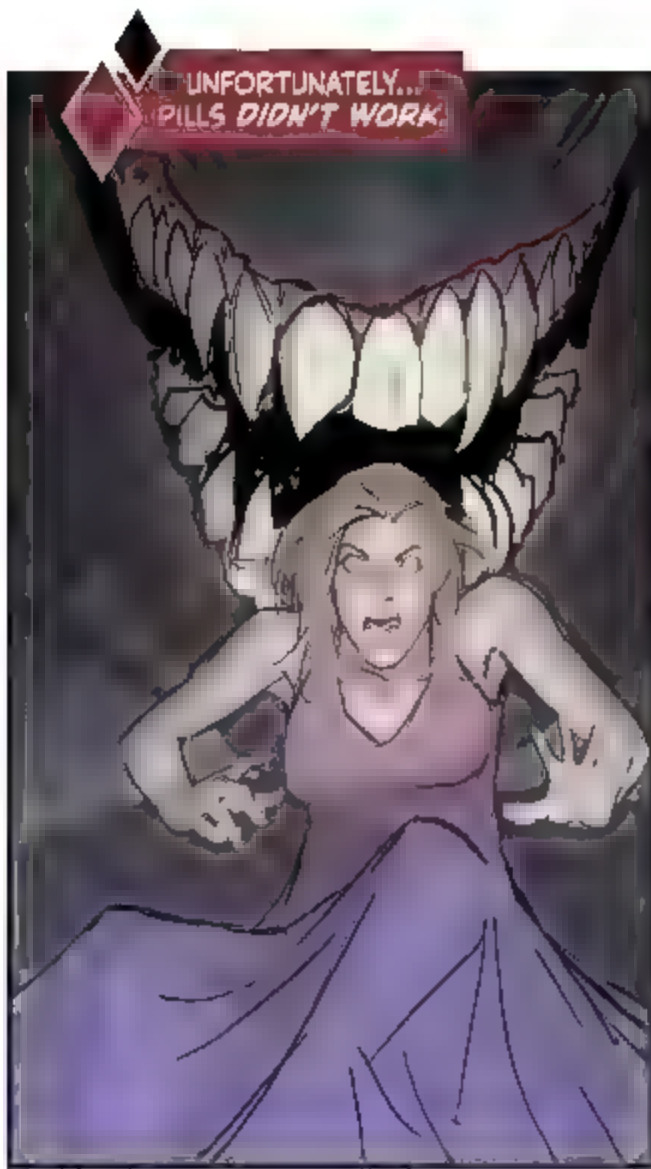
ALTHOUGH, BEFORE YOU  
DO THAT, I READ THIS  
BOOK ABOUT  
CRYSTALS...

NO CRYSTALS,  
NO DREAM CATCHERS,  
NO ROSARIES OR LUCKY  
CLOVERS.

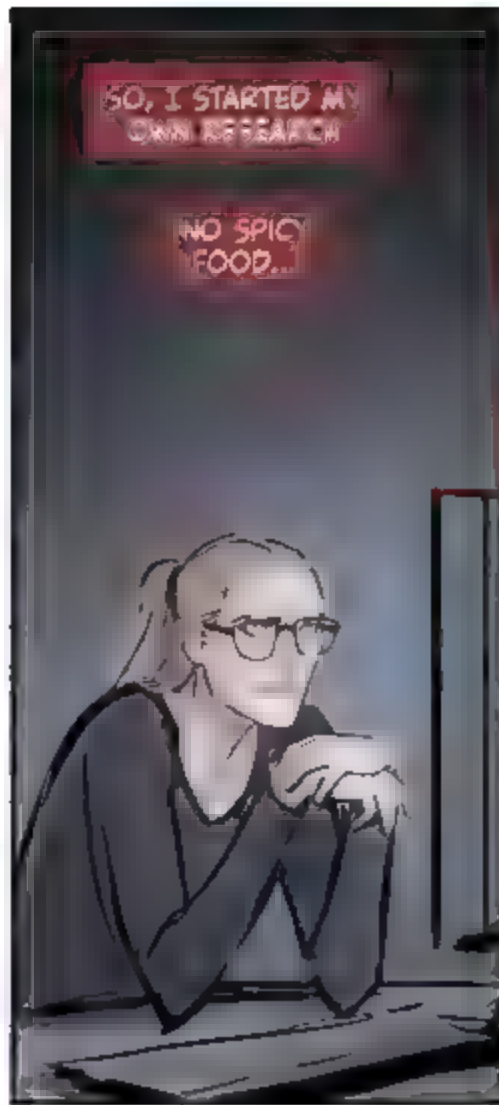
PILLS.  
*SHONORA!*

HORSE TRANQUILIZERS,  
ELEPHANT DOWNERS! SOME-  
THING THAT WILL KNOCK ME THE  
HELL OUT FOR EIGHT HOURS OF  
HONEST-TO-GOD DREAMLESS  
SLEEP!





UNFORTUNATELY...  
PILLS DIDN'T WORK.

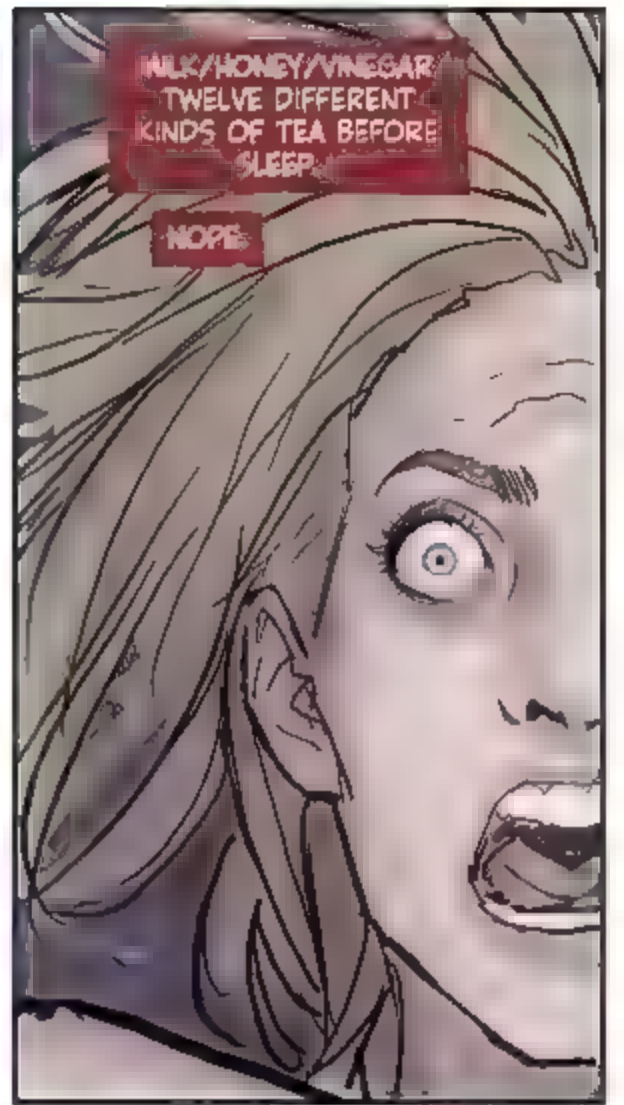


SO, I STARTED MY  
OWN RESEARCH

NO SPICY  
FOOD...

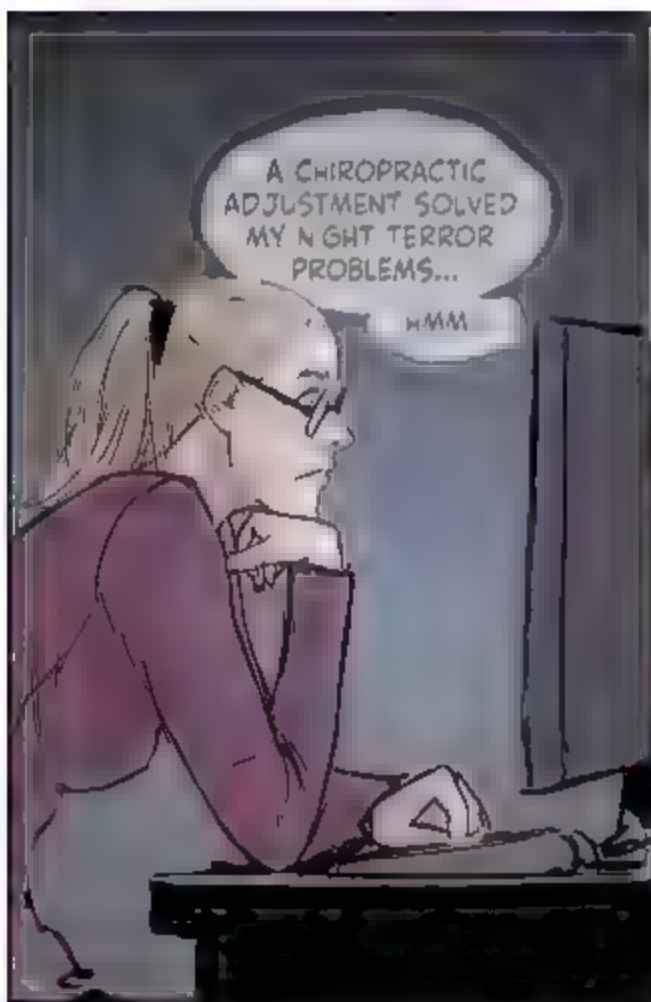


AGAIN...NADA!



MILK/HONEY/VINEGAR  
TWELVE DIFFERENT  
KINDS OF TEA BEFORE  
SLEEP

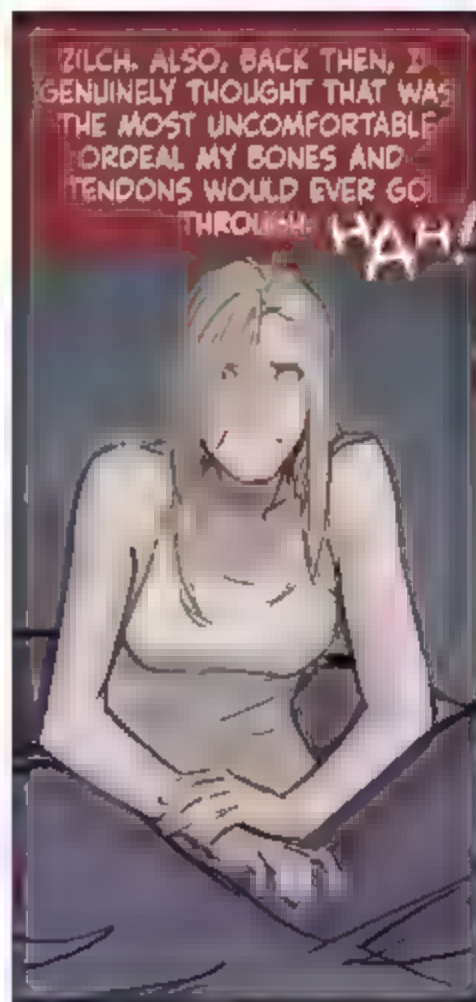
NOPE.



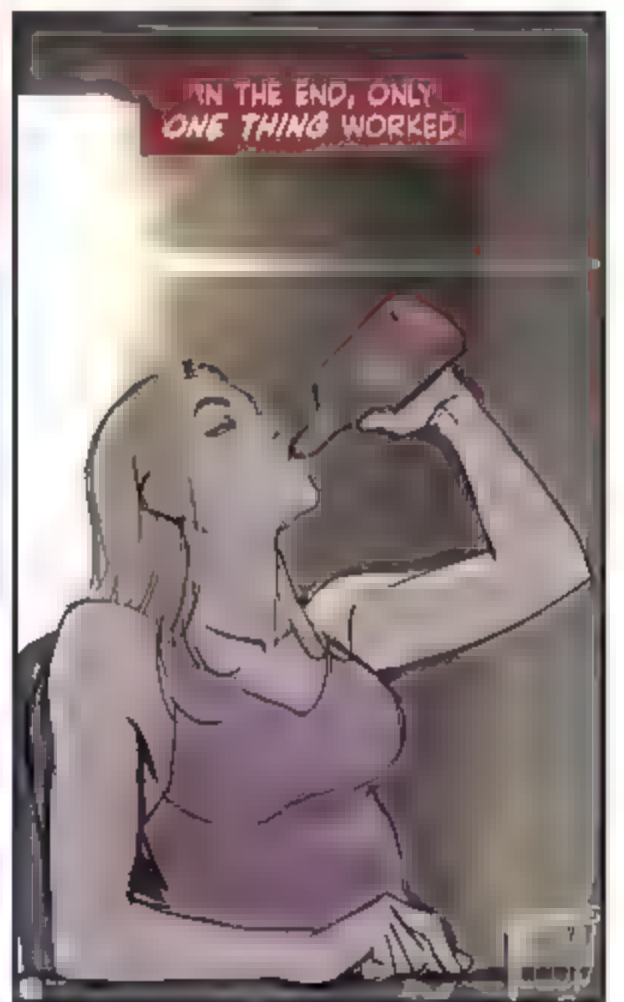
A CHIROPRACTIC  
ADJUSTMENT SOLVED  
MY NIGHT TERROR  
PROBLEMS...  
MMM



KRA-  
POP



ZILCH. ALSO, BACK THEN, I  
GENUINELY THOUGHT THAT WAS  
THE MOST UNCOMFORTABLE  
ORDEAL MY BONES AND  
TENDONS WOULD EVER GO  
THROUGH. HAH!



IN THE END, ONLY  
ONE THING WORKED.

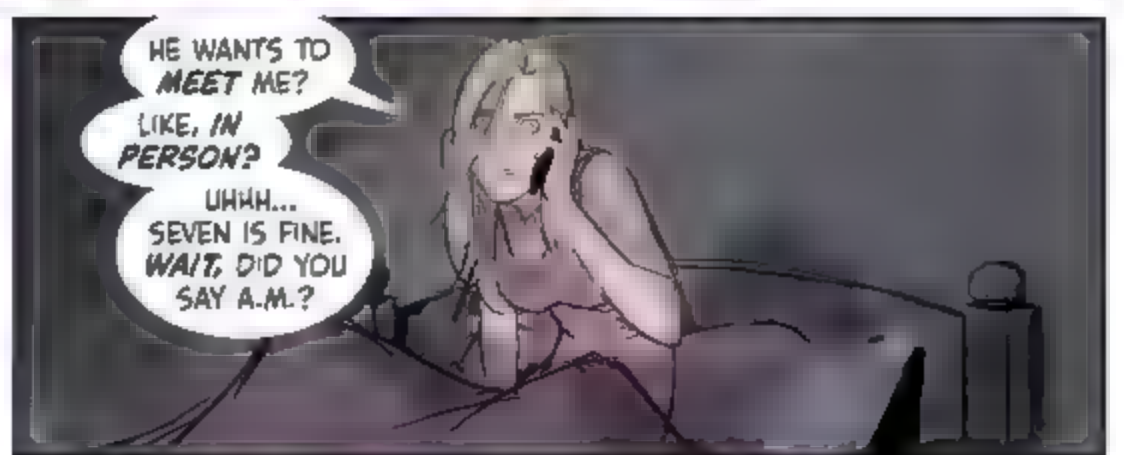


HEY, I SAID  
IT WORKED!  
NOT HELPED!

AARRGGGHH



YES?



HE WANTS TO  
MEET ME?  
LIKE, IN  
PERSON?  
UHHH...  
SEVEN IS FINE.  
WAIT, DID YOU  
SAY A.M.?

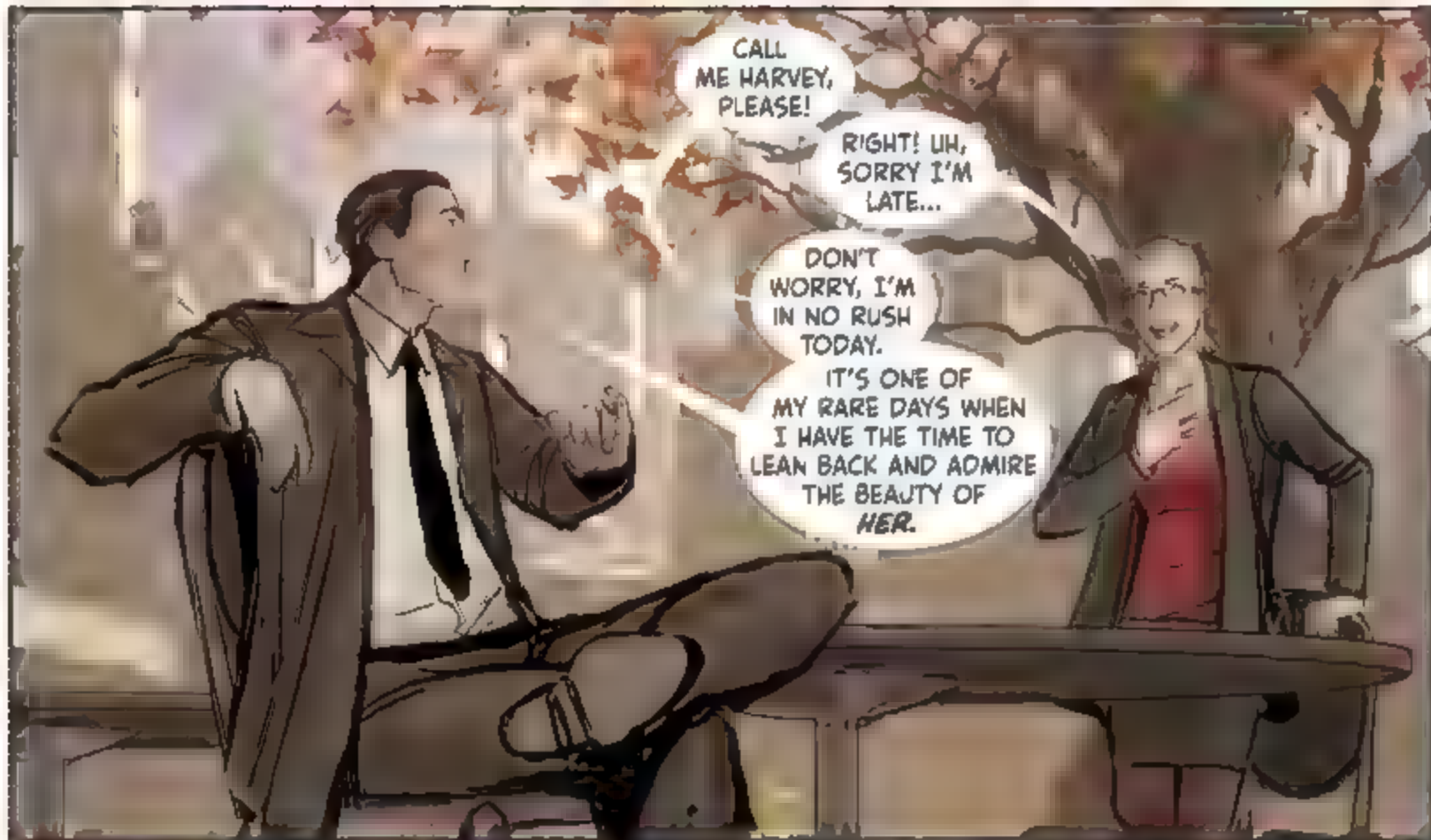
IN FACT, THIS WOULD HAVE  
GONE ON FOR GOD KNOWS  
HOW LONG IF IT WEREN'T  
FOR THE PHONE CALL.





DR. QUINZEL!

OH, MR. DENT!

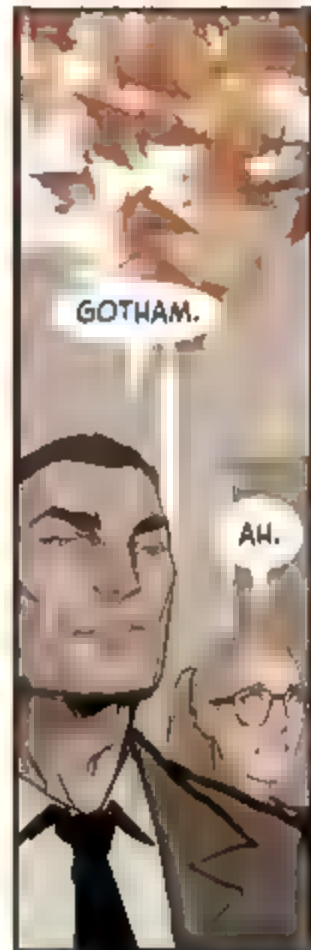
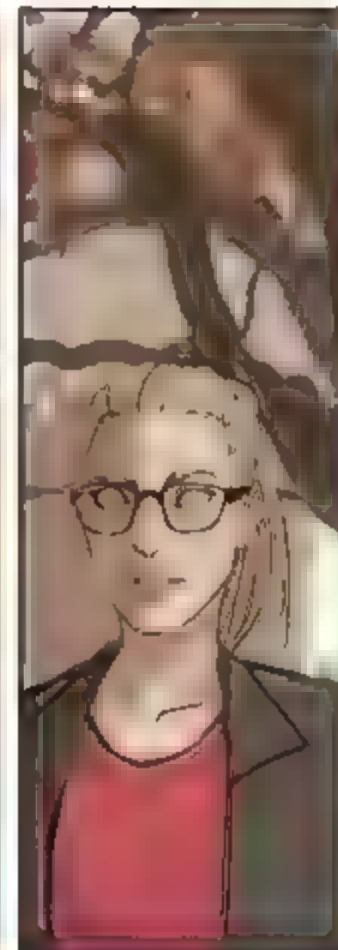


CALL  
ME HARVEY,  
PLEASE!

RIGHT! UH,  
SORRY I'M  
LATE...

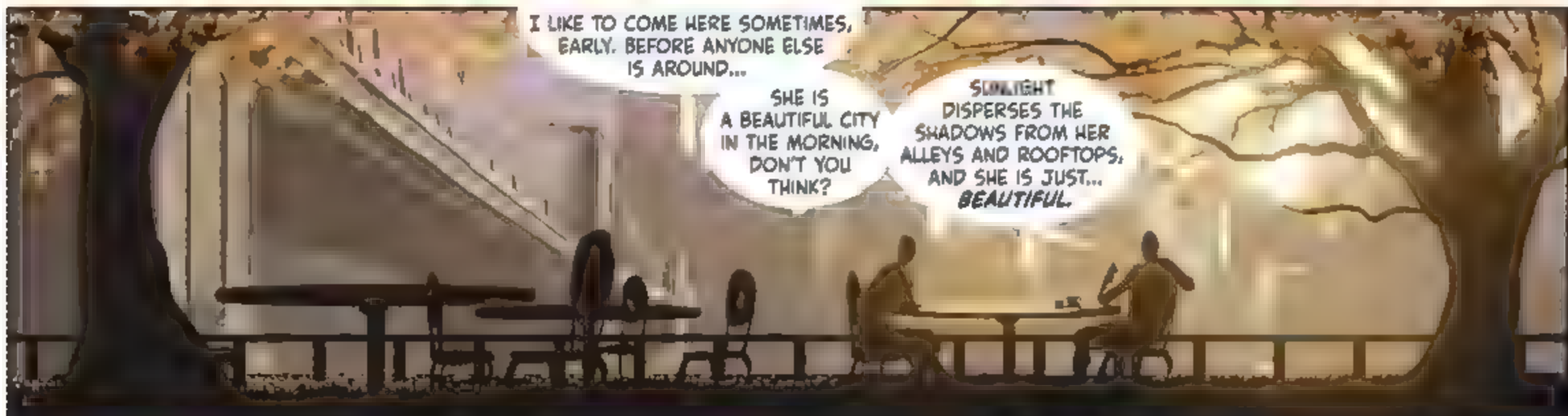
DON'T  
WORRY, I'M  
IN NO RUSH  
TODAY.

IT'S ONE OF  
MY RARE DAYS WHEN  
I HAVE THE TIME TO  
LEAN BACK AND ADMIRE  
THE BEAUTY OF  
*HER*.



GOTHAM.

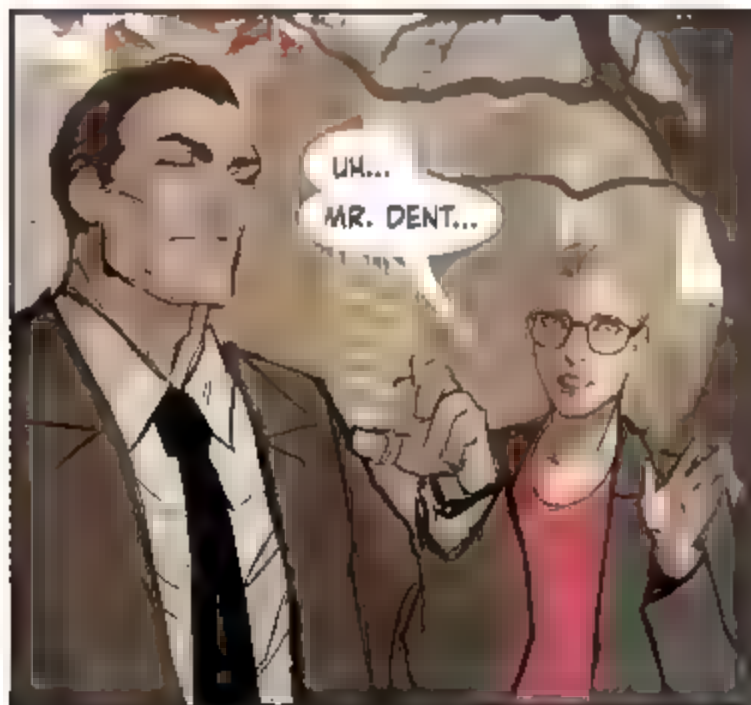
AH.



I LIKE TO COME HERE SOMETIMES,  
EARLY. BEFORE ANYONE ELSE  
IS AROUND...

SHE IS  
A BEAUTIFUL CITY  
IN THE MORNING,  
DON'T YOU  
THINK?

SUNLIGHT  
DISPERSES THE  
SHADOWS FROM HER  
ALLEYS AND ROOFTOPS,  
AND SHE IS JUST...  
*BEAUTIFUL*.



UH...  
MR. DENT...



I WANT  
YOU TO REFUSE THE  
WAYNE GRANT.

WHA--

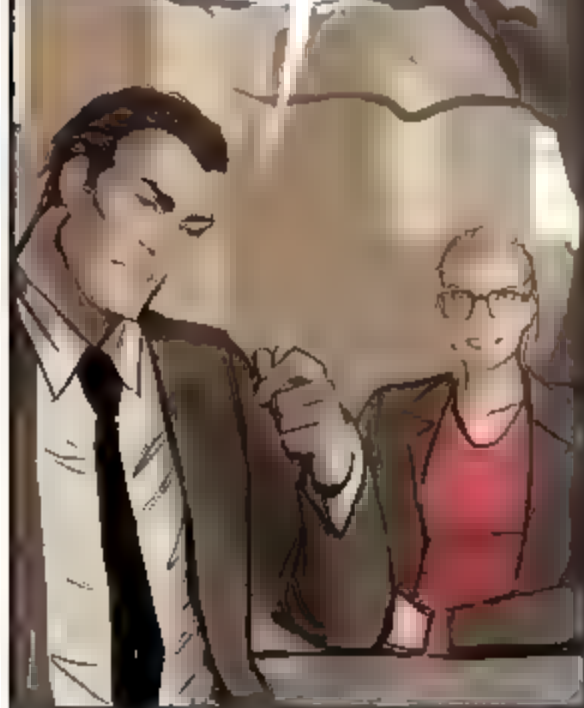


I'D ALSO LIKE  
YOU TO END YOUR  
RESEARCH.

EXCUSE  
YOU?!



BRUCE WAYNE IS...HE'S A *GOOD* MAN. HIS WHOLE LIFE, HE'S DONATED TO CAUSES LIKE YOURS, DESPERATELY TRYING TO UNDERSTAND THE *WHY* BEHIND THE MINDLESS VIOLENCE THAT BEFELL HIS FAMILY.



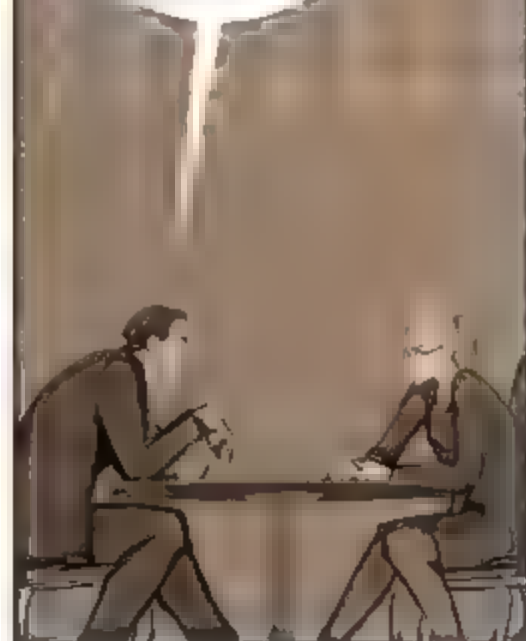
I FAIL TO SEE WHAT THAT HAS TO DO WITH MY RESEARCH! AND ALSO, WHAT GIVES YOU THE RIGHT--

LET ME FINISH, PLEASE.



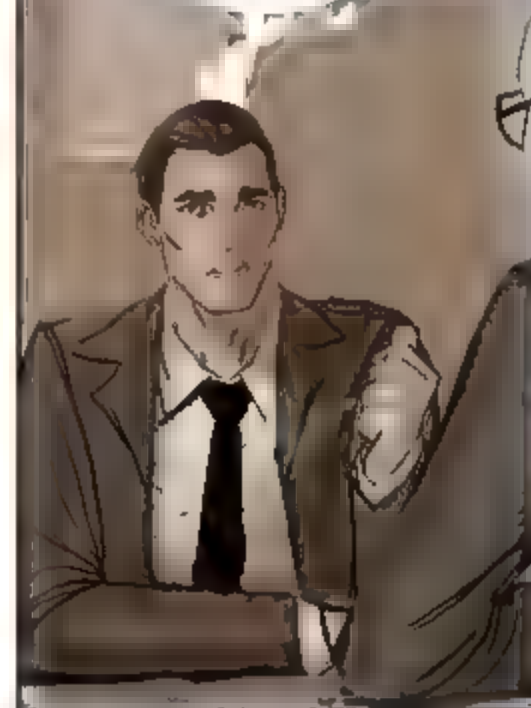
SEE, BRUCE IMAGINES THE CRIMINALS OF THIS CITY AS BROKEN, BUT *FIXABLE*.

I ASSUME YOU SHARE THIS OUTLOOK IN THE SAME WAY I ONCE DID.



HOWEVER...

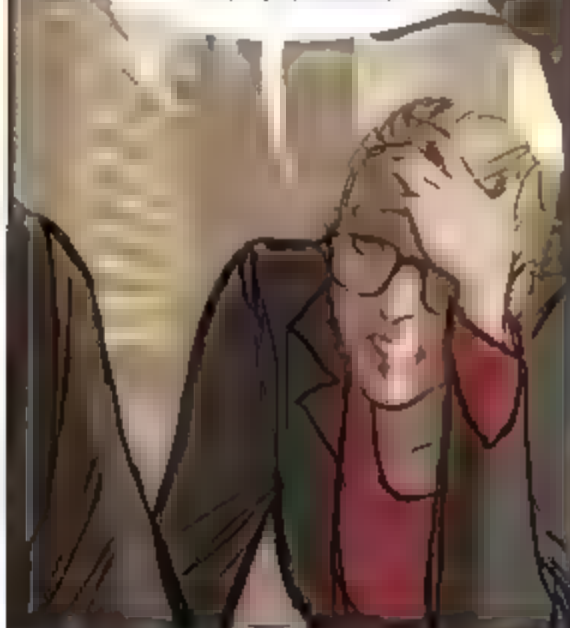
I'VE DEALT WITH THEM FOR LONG ENOUGH TO *KNOW BETTER*.



IN MY FIFTEEN YEARS AS A *PROSECUTOR*, I'VE WITNESSED *DEPTHS OF INHUMANITY* THAT WOULD MAKE HONEST PEOPLE OF GOTHAM *NEVER* LEAVE THEIR HOMES AGAIN.



MR. DENT, I'M SURE THIS LITTLE SPEECH GOES ON FOR A WHILE LONGER, BUT SINCE I SPEND MOST OF MY TIME THESE DAYS LISTENING TO THE SELF-AGGRANDIZING IDEOLOGIES OF PATIENTS IN ARKHAM, I'D RATHER NOT DO IT *HERE* AS WELL. COULD YOU GET TO THE *POINT*?



FINE. WHILE YOUR BOSS TRIED TO SLIP IT UNDER THE RADAR, ONE OF YOUR COWORKERS ANONYMOUSLY CALLED MY OFFICE AND INFORMED US ABOUT YOUR RESEARCH...



OH, I HAVE A DECENT ENOUGH IDEA OF *WHO* IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN...BUT DO GO ON.

AND WE'VE COME TO SEE YOUR WORK FOR WHAT IT IS.

*A THREAT.*



A THREAT TO THE VERY *NOTION* OF PROTECTING *LAW AND ORDER* IN GOTHAM.

RIGHT NOW, EIGHT OUT OF TEN OF THE *MOST-HARDENED* CRIMINALS ARE SITUATED NOT IN MAXIMUM SECURITY FACILITIES LIKE BLACKGATE, BUT IN *ARKHAM ASYLUM!*

THE BREAKOUT RATE THERE IS SO HIGH THE BLOODY PLACE MIGHT AS WELL HAVE REVOLVING DOORS INSTALLED!

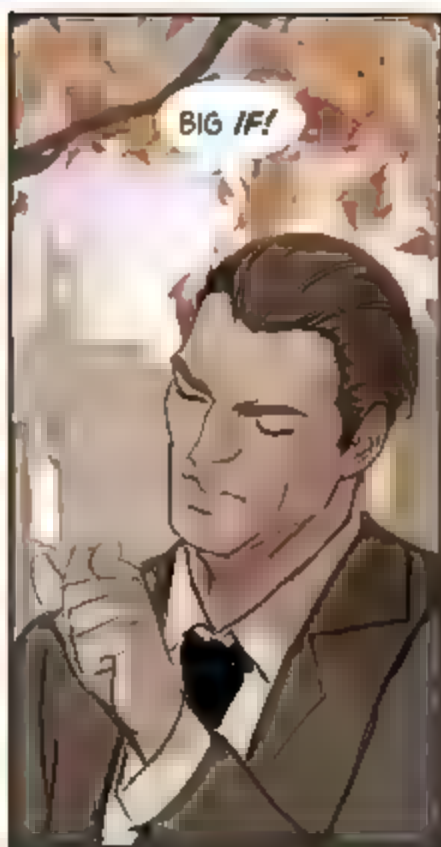
YOU PUBLISH YOUR RESEARCH AND EVERY DEFENSE LAWYER LOOKING TO BUILD A CAREER WILL JUMP ON IT LIKE A *RABID DOG*, AND BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, EVERY TRIAL WILL BE NOTHING BUT LAWYERS TELLING SOME SOB STORY ABOUT HOW THEIR CLIENTS LOST THEIR ABILITY TO *FEEL EMPATHY*.



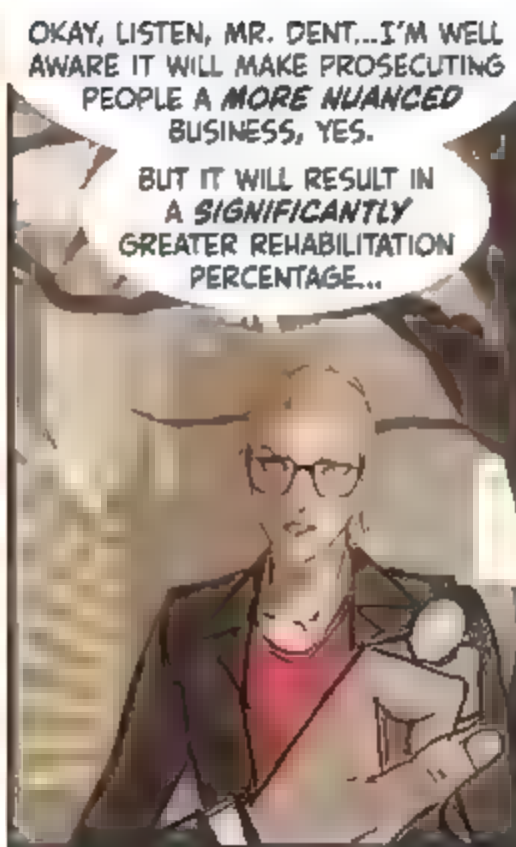




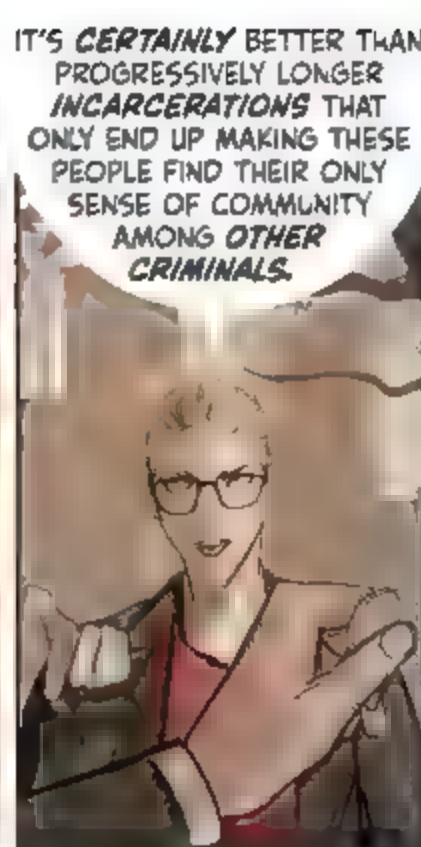
IF MY  
THEORY IS PROVEN  
**CORRECT--**



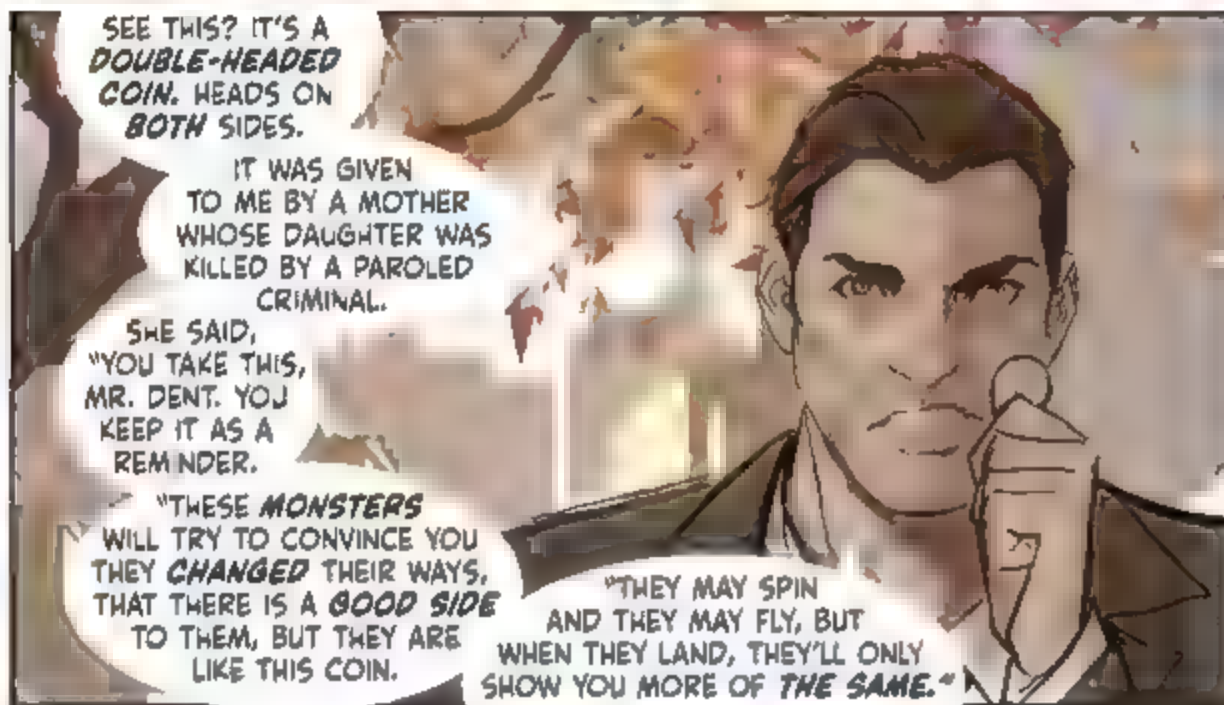
**BIG IF!**



OKAY, LISTEN, MR. DENT...I'M WELL  
AWARE IT WILL MAKE PROSECUTING  
PEOPLE A **MORE NUANCED**  
BUSINESS, YES.  
BUT IT WILL RESULT IN  
A **SIGNIFICANTLY**  
GREATER REHABILITATION  
PERCENTAGE...



IT'S **CERTAINLY** BETTER THAN  
PROGRESSIVELY LONGER  
**INCARCERATIONS** THAT  
ONLY END UP MAKING THESE  
PEOPLE FIND THEIR ONLY  
SENSE OF COMMUNITY  
AMONG **OTHER**  
**CRIMINALS.**



SEE THIS? IT'S A  
**DOUBLE-HEADED**  
**COIN.** HEADS ON  
**BOTH SIDES.**

IT WAS GIVEN  
TO ME BY A MOTHER  
WHOSE DAUGHTER WAS  
KILLED BY A PAROLED  
CRIMINAL.

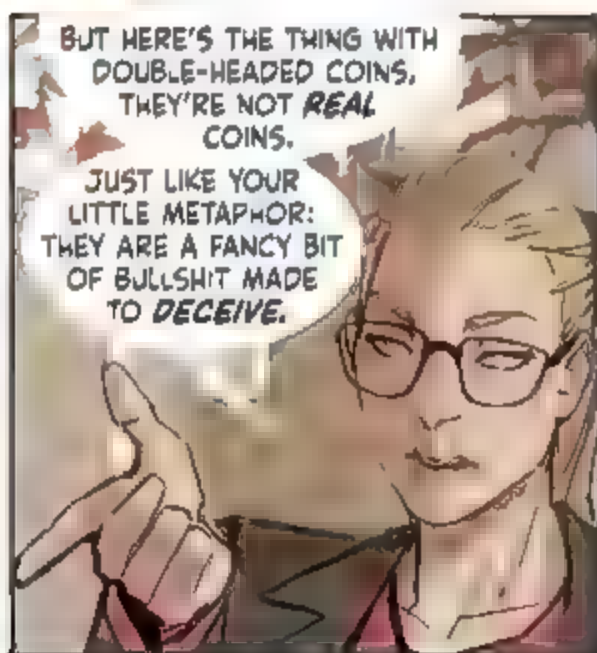
SHE SAID,  
"YOU TAKE THIS,  
MR. DENT. YOU  
KEEP IT AS A  
REMINDER.

"THESE **MONSTERS**  
WILL TRY TO CONVINCE YOU  
THEY **CHANGED** THEIR WAYS,  
THAT THERE IS A **GOOD SIDE**  
TO THEM, BUT THEY ARE  
LIKE THIS COIN.

"THEY MAY SPIN  
AND THEY MAY FLY, BUT  
WHEN THEY LAND, THEY'LL ONLY  
SHOW YOU MORE OF **THE SAME.**"



SEE, I BET THAT STORY  
WORKS REAL WELL AT YOUR  
ELECTION FUNDRAISERS. IT'S  
PUNCHY, IT'S GOT A NICE  
LITTLE GIMMICK WITH THE  
DOUBLE-HEADED  
COIN...



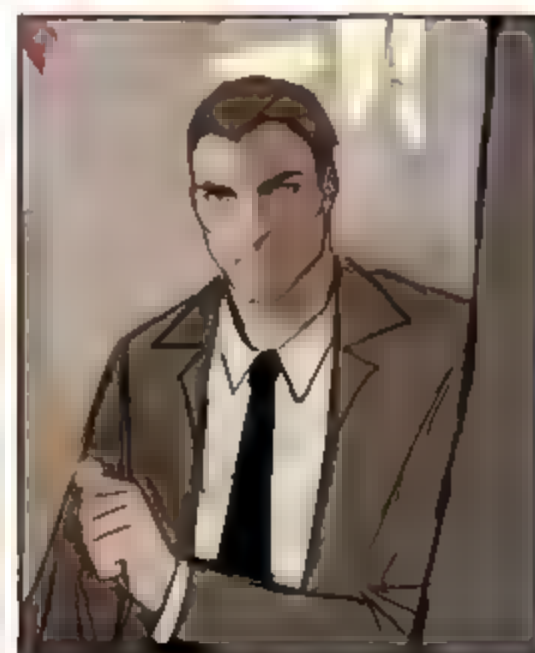
BUT HERE'S THE THING WITH  
DOUBLE-HEADED COINS,  
THEY'RE NOT **REAL**  
COINS.

JUST LIKE YOUR  
LITTLE METAPHOR:  
THEY ARE A FANCY BIT  
OF BULLSHIT MADE  
TO **DECEIVE.**



GET YOURSELF A  
REGULAR OLD COIN,  
MR. DENT.

IT MAY MAKE  
YOU SEE THE WORLD  
DIFFERENTLY. OH, AND  
I'M **NOT** BACKING  
OFF.

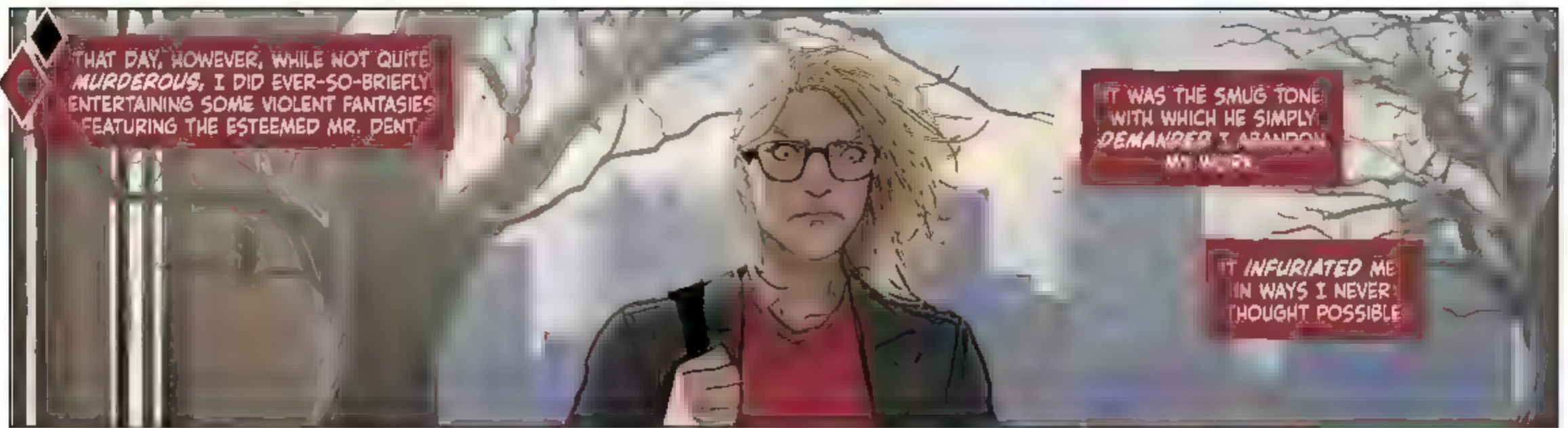


IN FACT, I'M  
**JUST GETTING**  
**STARTED.**



IT'S KINDA FUNNY...ALL OF OUR  
BIG WORDS AND MORALIZING AND  
YET WITHIN FIVE MONTHS WE WOULD  
BOTH BECOME MURDERERS.

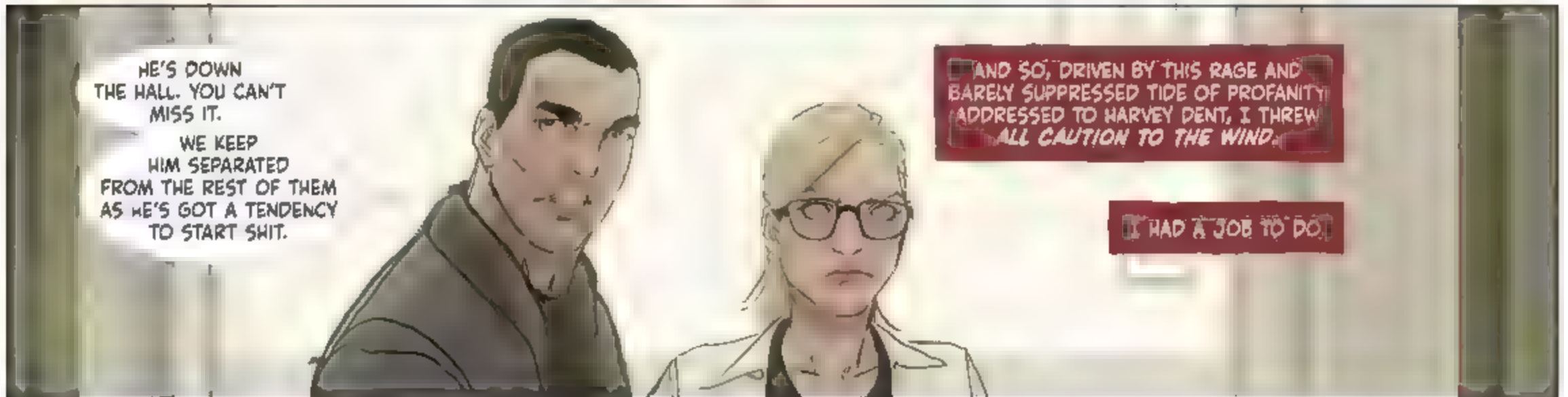




THAT DAY, HOWEVER, WHILE NOT QUITE MURDEROUS, I DID EVER-SO-BRIEFLY ENTERTAINING SOME VIOLENT FANTASIES FEATURING THE ESTEEMED MR. DENT.

IT WAS THE SMUG TONE WITH WHICH HE SIMPLY DEMANDER I ABANDON MY WORK.

IT INFURIATED ME IN WAYS I NEVER THOUGHT POSSIBLE



HE'S DOWN THE HALL. YOU CAN'T MISS IT.  
WE KEEP HIM SEPARATED FROM THE REST OF THEM AS HE'S GOT A TENDENCY TO START SHIT.

AND SO, DRIVEN BY THIS RAGE AND BARELY SUPPRESSED TIDE OF PROFANITY ADDRESSED TO HARVEY DENT, I THREW ALL CAUTION TO THE WIND.

I HAD A JOB TO DO.

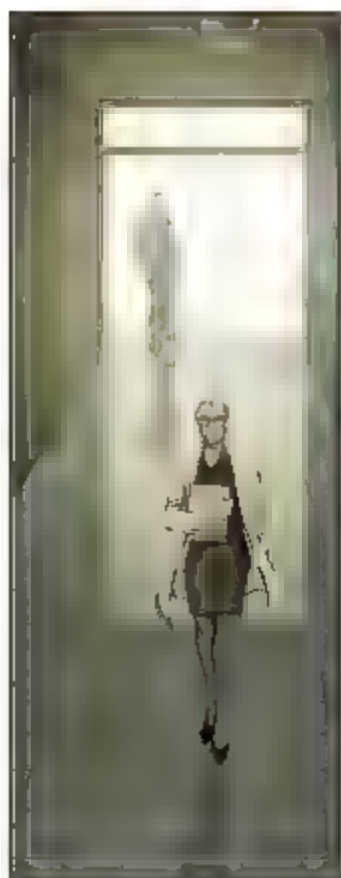


I MEAN, FOR ALL I KNEW HE COULD BE THE ONE...

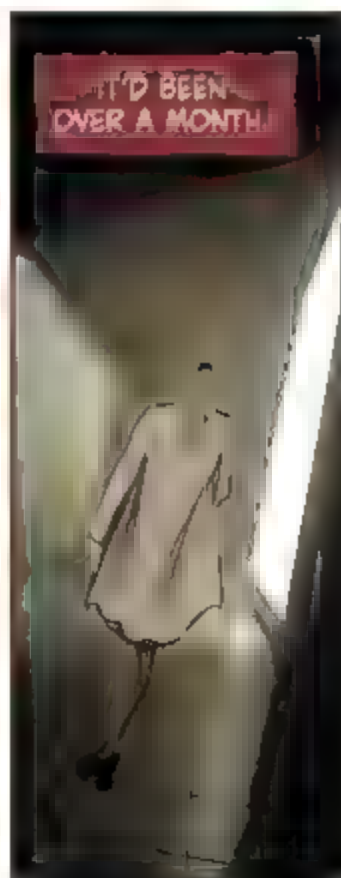
THE PERFECT CANDIDATE FOR MY STUDY.

CALL IF YOU NEED ME.

THANK YOU, MR. BRONSON.



AND ANYWAY...



IT'D BEEN OVER A MONTH.

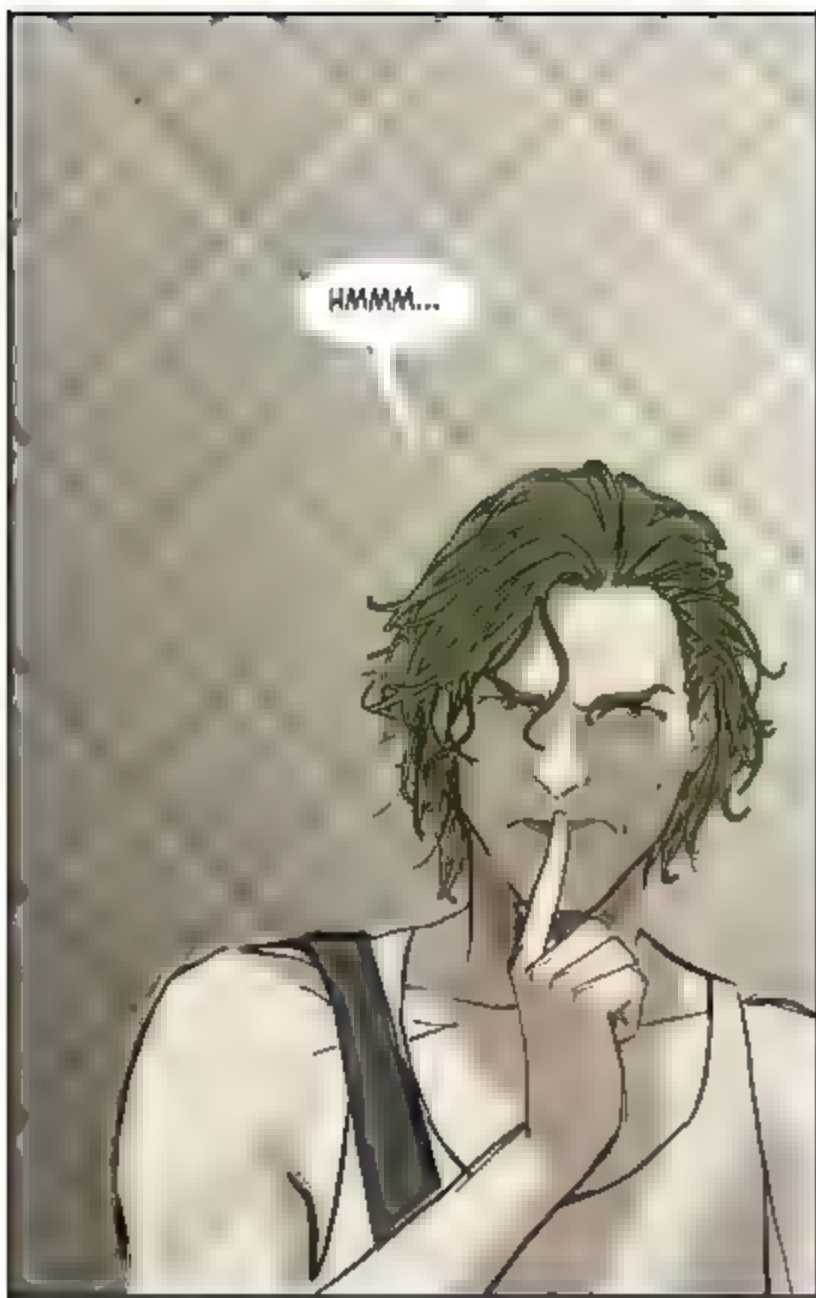


SURELY HE WOULDN'T REMEMBER ME.

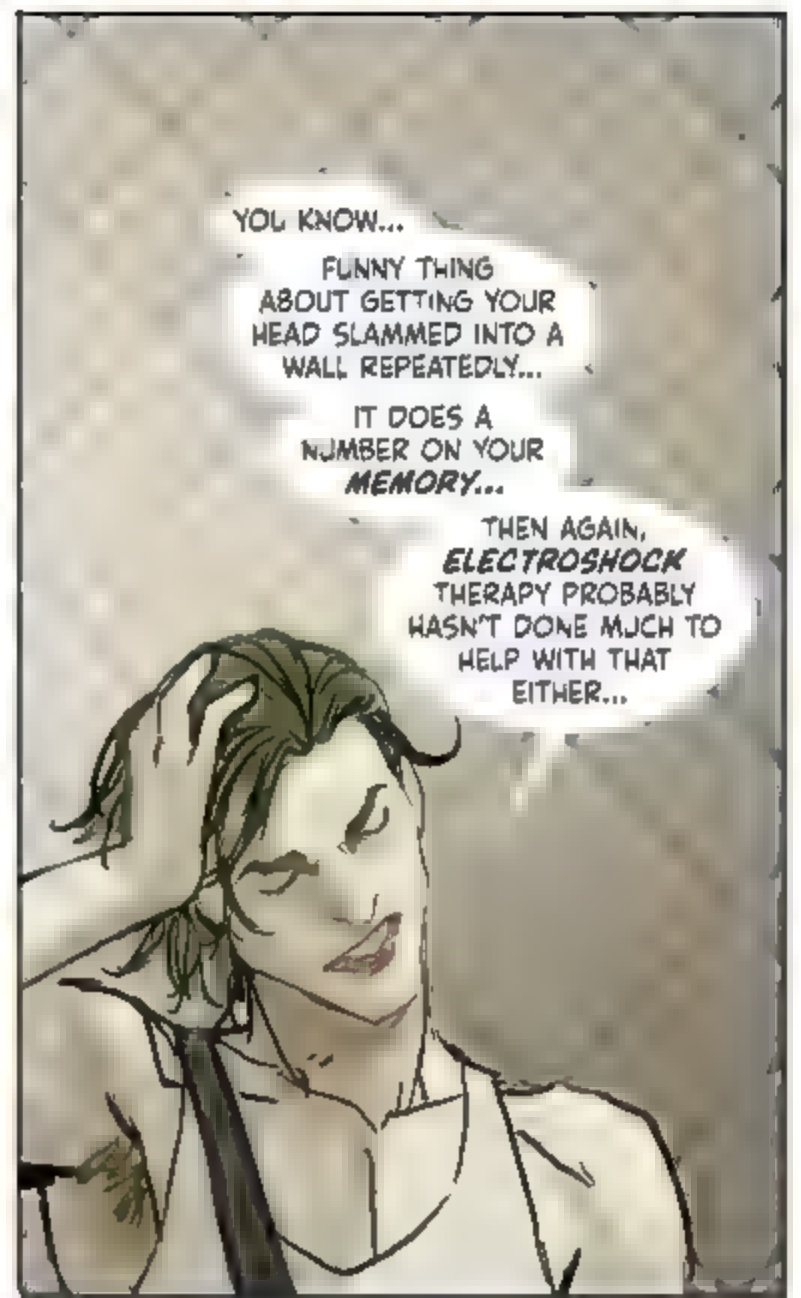
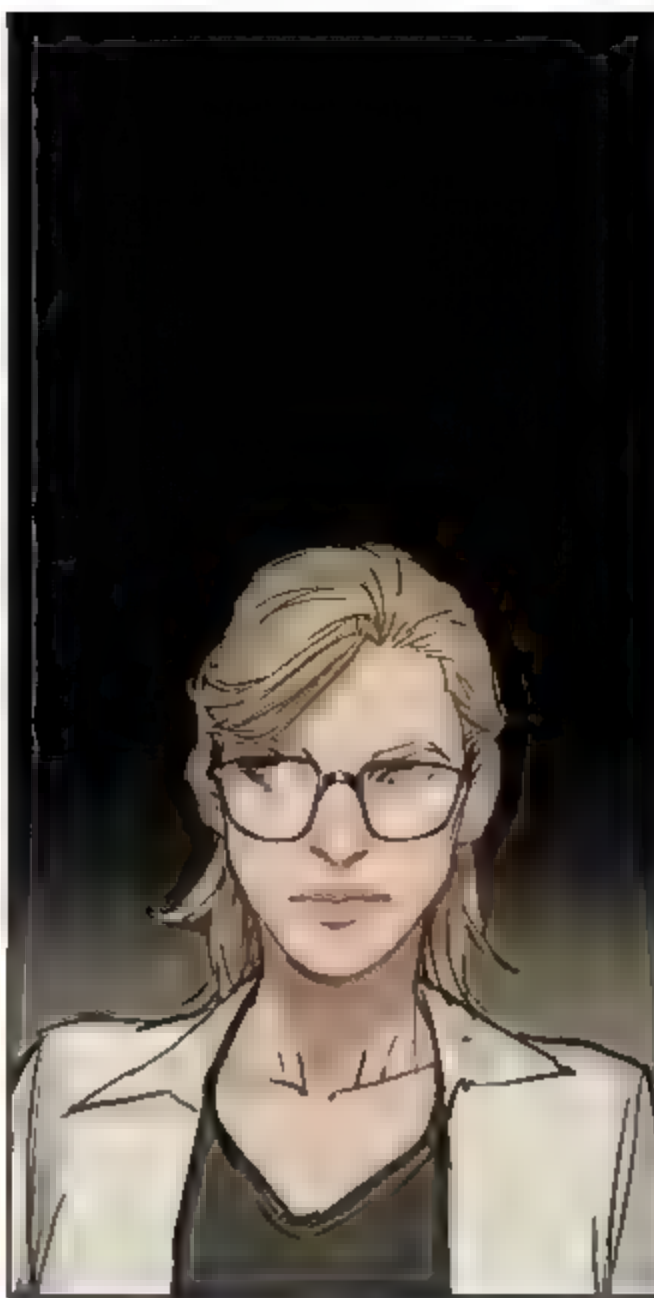








HMMM...

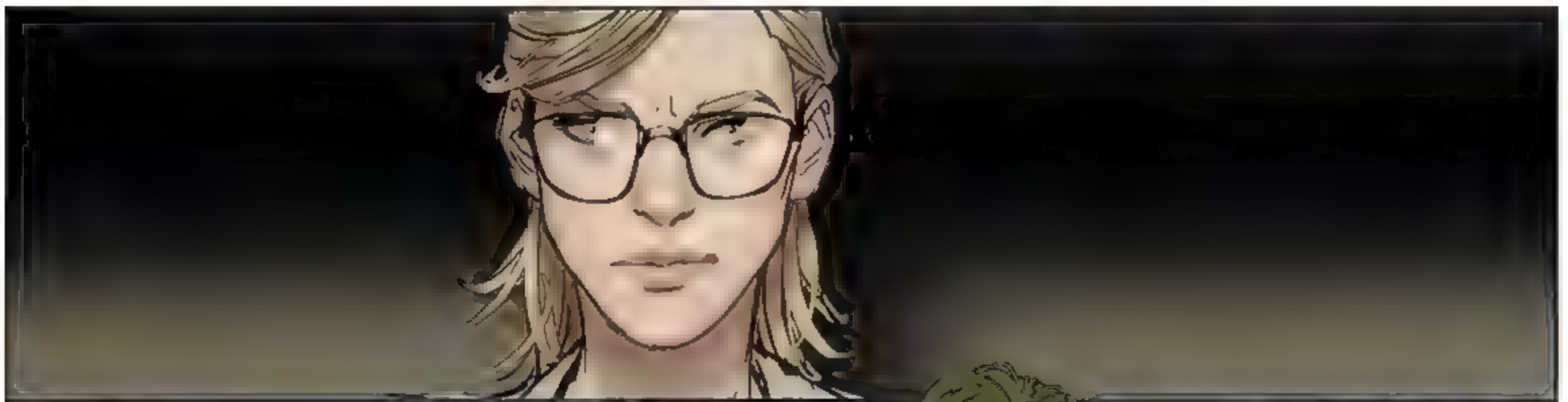


YOU KNOW...

FUNNY THING  
ABOUT GETTING YOUR  
HEAD SLAMMED INTO A  
WALL REPEATEDLY...

IT DOES A  
NUMBER ON YOUR  
**MEMORY...**

THEN AGAIN,  
**ELECTROSHOCK**  
THERAPY PROBABLY  
HASN'T DONE MUCH TO  
HELP WITH THAT  
EITHER...



WHAT  
I MEAN IS,  
YOU **LOOK** LIKE  
SOMEONE I'VE  
MET...BUT...NOT  
ENTIRELY!



IT'S LIKE  
SOMETHING IS...









YOU TELL  
ME! THAT'S WHY YOU'RE  
HERE, AFTER ALL: TO PICK  
THROUGH MY BRAIN,  
MAKE SENSE OF MY  
STORIES.

RIGHT...

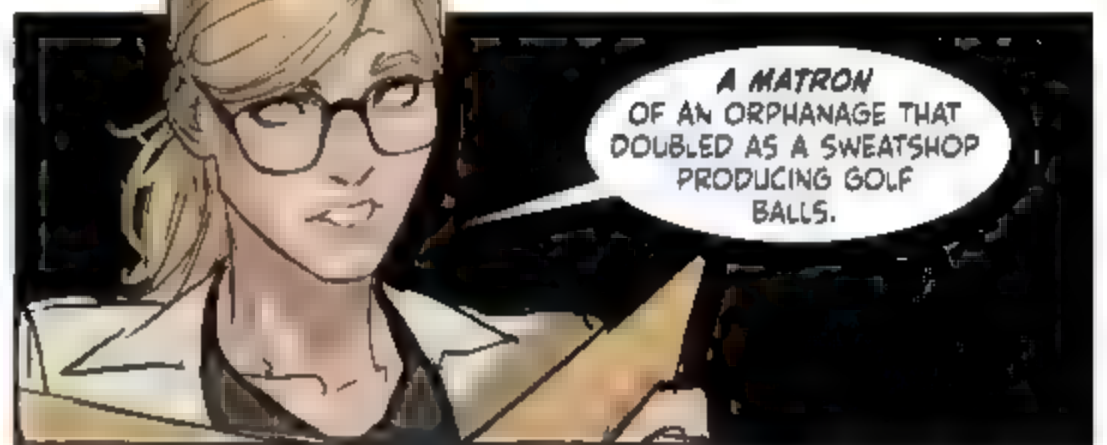


THE STORIES.

I'VE  
READ UP ON  
THEM.

AS IT TURNS  
OUT--ALL AT THE  
SAME TIME--

YOU WERE  
A RICH MOBSTER,  
THROWN INTO A VAT OF  
ACID, A FAILED COMEDIAN,  
ABUSED BY YOUR FATHER,  
MOTHER, BROTHER, AND...



A MATRON  
OF AN ORPHANAGE THAT  
DOUBLED AS A SWEATSHOP  
PRODUCING GOLF  
BALLS.



PFFTT!  
I WAS ALWAYS  
PROUD OF THAT  
ONE.

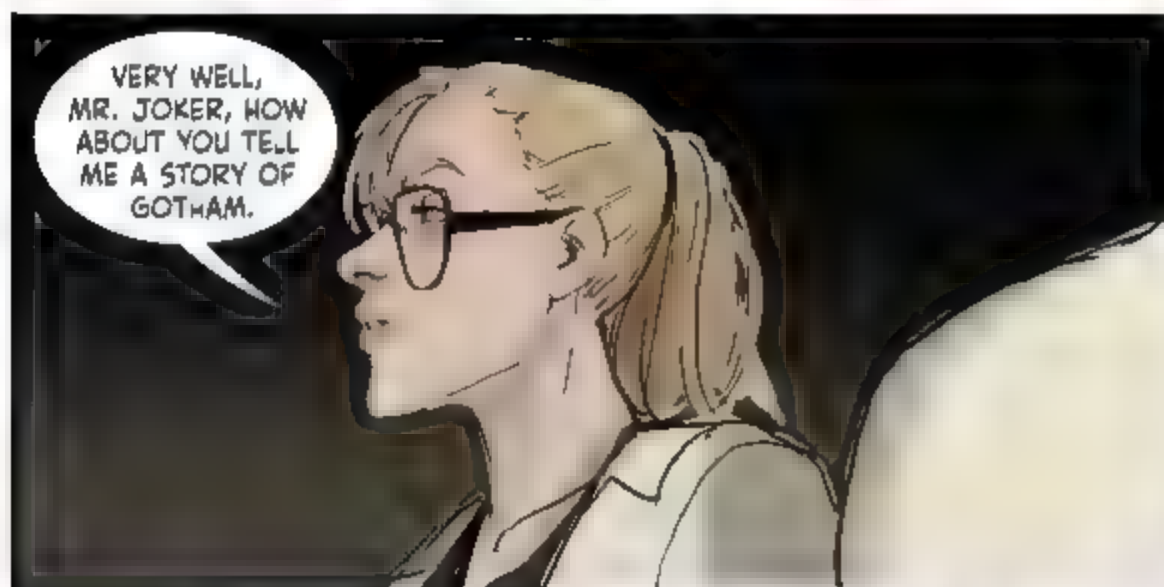
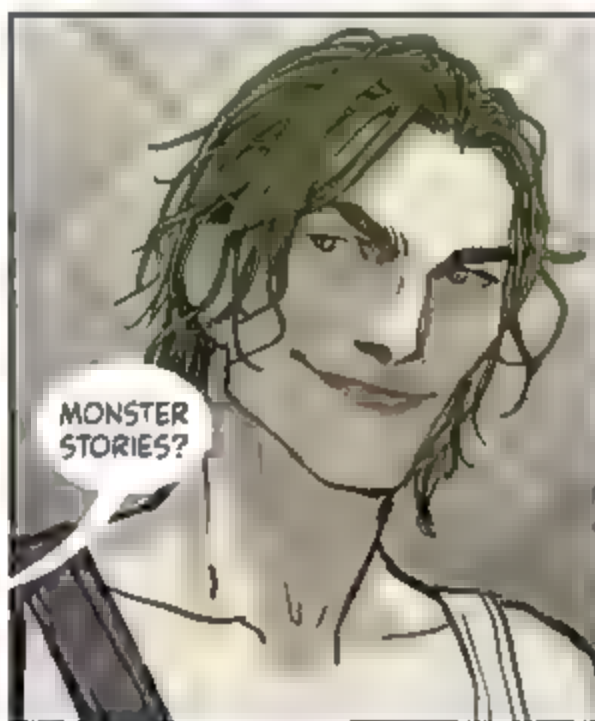
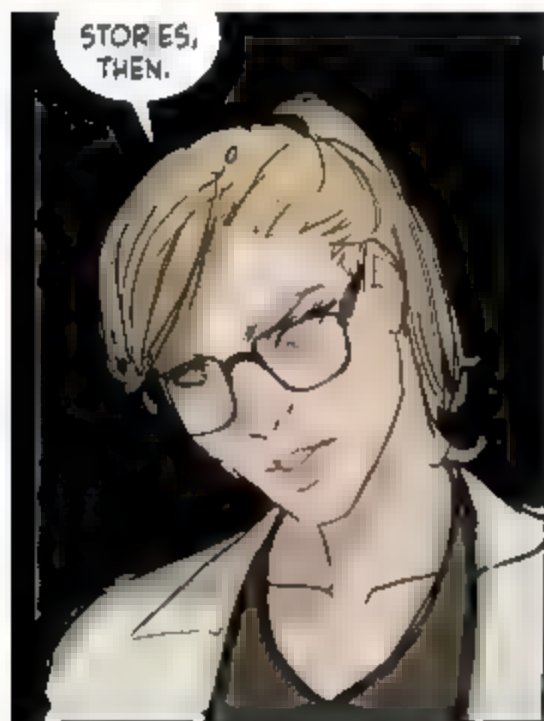
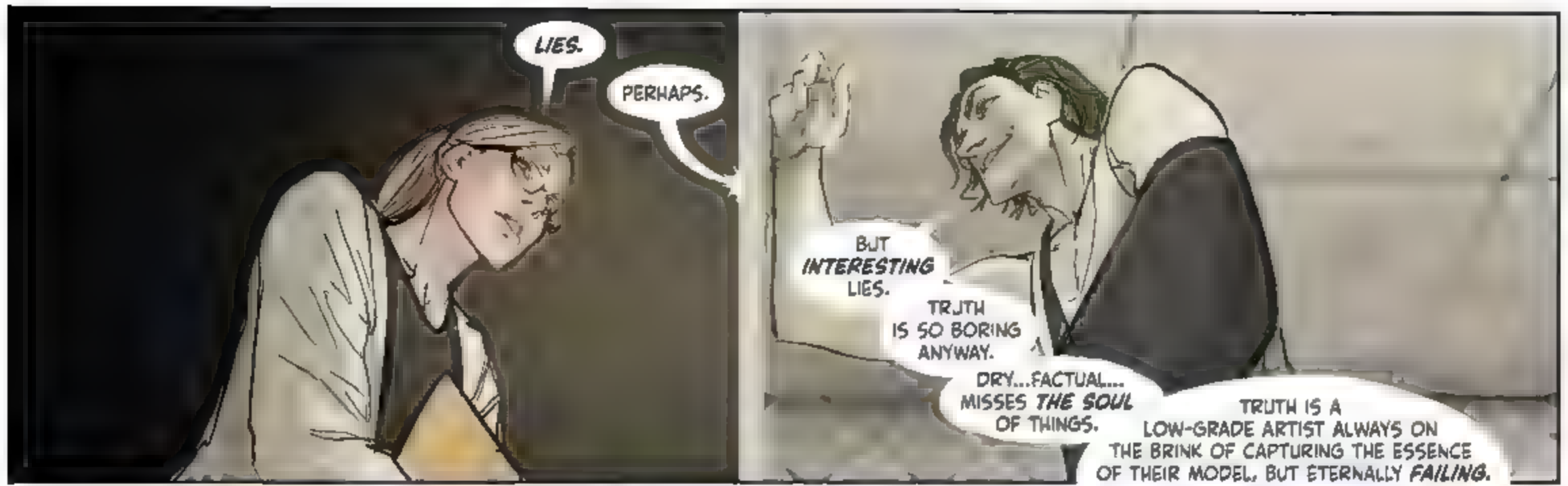
DOC  
WILKINS ACTUALLY  
BELIEVED  
IT!



BUT SEE,  
NOW YOU RUINED  
IT.

I COULD  
HAVE TOLD YOU  
STORIES LIKE THOSE  
AS WELL!







I REMEMBER THINKING  
THIS IS FINE. I CAN  
CONTROL THIS SITUATION.

IT WAS NEITHER THE FIRST  
NOR THE LAST TIME I WAS  
WRONG ABOUT THAT.

VERY WELL,  
MR. JAY.

END OF CHAPTER ONE









**"HEAVEN  
HELP ME..."**

**"...A SMALL  
PART OF ME..."**

**"...WANTS TO  
LET HIM IN."**

# HARLEEN

BOOK TWO - IN STORES OCTOBER

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HARLEEN





"THE ROAD TO  
**HELL**  
IS PAVED WITH  
**GOOD  
INTENTIONS.**

"ON THAT ROAD  
I SAW A  
**PALE  
MAN,**

"AND HE  
**SMILED**  
AT  
**ME...**"

A BRILLIANT YOUNG PSYCHIATRIST WITH THE CURE FOR THE MADNESS OF GOTHAM, DR. HARLEEN QUINZEL, TAKES DRASTIC MEASURES TO SAVE THE CITY FROM ITSELF. WITNESS THE BIRTH OF THE LEGENDARY SUPER-VILLAIN HARLEY QUINN IN THIS STUNNING REIMAGINING OF HARLEY AND THE JOKER'S TWISTED AND TRAGIC LOVE AFFAIR BY ACCLAIMED STORYTELLER STJEPAN SEJIC (*AQUAMAN: UNDERWORLD, SUNSTONE*).

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